

“I KNEW WHO I WAS THIS MORNING”
THE HOSTS’ JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY AND SELF-REFLECTION IN THE MIDST
OF VOLUNTEER TOURISM

A Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, volunteer tourism has emerged as not only a meaningful way to spend a vacation, but also as an intriguing area of empirical inquiry. This phenomenon, which began as wealthy westerners sought to give a helping hand to the less privileged, has morphed into a worldwide trend that has put destinations on the map. Little is known, however, of how intimate experiences in volunteer tourism shape the hosts' sense of self and identity.

Looking at identity formation as a process (Burke, 1991), I conducted photo elicitation interviews with rural farmers in Guatemala's San Miguel Cooperative, outside of Antigua Guatemala. This study was an effort to understand the maintenance of identities in the presence of volunteer tourists and how the host self is impacted after the tourists have returned home. The study focuses on two main objectives. First, exploring how the intimacy of volunteer tourism and the presence of volunteer tourists helps to form and maintain host personal identity, and second, understanding how these identities are negotiated and maintained after the departure of volunteer tourists. Through this qualitative approach, I aimed to give a voice to the unheard host, telling and sharing the story of those whose voices are often overshadowed. The narrow scope of this study, however, emphasizes only one construct in a multi-dimensional, postcolonial relationship that will require constant scrutiny and progress.

Over the course of 12 interviews, using photos to guide the conversation, we are able to better understand the progression of the host self, their journey from discomfort to confidence. The hosts' experience with volunteer tourism proved to be a journey that bred feelings of

oppression, nervousness, and disconnection but was met with a concluding positivity. Despite inciting these detrimental feelings, the volunteer tourism journey offered the hosts an opportunity to reevaluate their understanding of their self and prosper in the immediate situation and beyond. We learned that, despite the neocolonialistic nature of volunteer tourism (Palacios, 2010), the hosts are able to overcome oppressive dynamics and persist with a more positive view of the self and a new understanding of societies beyond their own.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the members of the San Miguel Escobar Cooperative. For their dedication to and passion for providing the world with better coffee.

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Most great accomplishments are not made alone. While its greatness is debatable, this thesis is no exception. The hours of work poured into this document were not all my own. Scores of people, colleagues, friends, mentors, whether they knew it or not, helped this thesis blossom to its fullest potential. Without them, I could not be here today.

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NOMENCLATURE

IRB	Institutional Review Board
USAC	Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Study

However you choose to define volunteer tourism, as a form of alternative tourism (Singh, 2002), niche tourism (Novelli, 2005), or otherwise, it is difficult to ignore its still growing prominence in the research community and global press. What began as mostly a Global North – Global South phenomenon, with trips originating in Europe, Australia and the United States (Alexander, 2012), has grown into a global trend to include travelers from other corners of the world (Lo & Lee, 2011). Still, though, most groups of volunteers are those coming from relatively rich countries traveling to relatively poor countries (Volume and Value of Volunteer Tourism, 2008). The trend has gained such prominence that in a Time Magazine article on the topic, an author notes that the leisure travel booking website CheapTickets.com began offering volunteer experiences as a part of a customer’s booking (Fitzpatrick, 2007). This company is not alone in offering volunteer opportunities. More recently, CheapFlights.com offered travel inspiration on voluntourism, categorized specialty travel, for those looking for a “more fulfilling reason to travel (Hinkle, 2014). A study conducted by a leading tourism consulting firm, Tourism Research and Marketing, in which 300 organizations were surveyed, found there to be 1.6 million tourists undertaking volunteer excursions annually (Tourism Research and Marketing (TRAM) & European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education & Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). The same researchers placed a market value on volunteer tourism of up to £1.3 billion with the most substantial part of the market’s growth taking place since 1990

(Volume and Value of Volunteer Tourism, 2008). Those numbers have not yet seemed to let up (Kahn, 2014). Based on such figures, attention was inevitable.

While the research community has given volunteer tourism a significant amount of attention in recent years (Coghlan, 2015; Conran, 2011; McGehee, 2012; Woosnam & Lee, 2011), mentions are not limited to scholars. Results of a recent Google search of volunteer tourism range from advertisements touting a program recommended by Bill Gates for the low, all-inclusive cost of \$37 a day to respected news outlets publishing with titles such as “Voluntourism Explodes in Popularity, Who’s It Helping Most?” (Kahn, 2014). As evidenced by this search, attitudes towards the phenomenon vary; Coldwell (2014) cites these varying attitudes as expressed by influential news organizations. Ethics seems to be the overriding theme among the majority of news articles concerning volunteer tourism. Despite the ethical concerns of these authors, scholars’ pieces discuss mostly tourist-centered motivations (Lo & Lee, 2011, Broad, 2003, Benson & Seibert, 2009) and impacts (Sin, 2009; McGehee & Santos, 2005). But a number of studies have been emerging where the impacts on tourists have been shown to range from increased social responsibility (McGehee & Santos, 2005) to an enhanced awareness of the self (Wearing & Neil, 2000). The volunteer tourism experience has also been shown to involve intimate interactions (Conran, 2011) between the host and tourist, some even lead the tourist into the homes and private spaces of the host. Borrowing from Tice (1992), we see that it is these public experiences within the private spaces that the life and behavior of the host is monitored, and the self can be reevaluated.

1.2 Purpose and Objectives

I am concerned primarily with the impacts of an intimate volunteer tourism environment and how the experience shapes the hosts' sense of self and identity. Looking at identity formation as a process (Burke, 1991), I hoped to understand the maintenance of such an identity in the presence of volunteer tourists and how the host self is impacted when the tourists return home. These goals were guided by two main research questions.

First, I asked how the intimate experiences of volunteer tourism help to form and maintain the hosts' personal identity. In this, I sought to understand how the host's perception of their self in the volunteer tourism experience was negotiated and how their perceived role in the experience changed in the presence of volunteers. The second question guiding my research was asked to understand how these identities were negotiated and maintained after the departure of volunteer tourists. I used a semi-structured, photo elicitation interview format. In this, volunteer hosts were given disposable cameras and asked to document their experiences as they felt appropriate. Restrictions on the host were minimal, allowing them to document whatever they felt was memorable, important, or otherwise. Considerations of colonial hegemony and concerns of power conflict inspired the use of a method that neutralized my status as a western researcher. This approach allowed for conversation-like interviews that gave the host, through the pictures they chose to take, the ability to control the conversation. The interview guideline shown in Appendix A served as a tool for guiding my questions.

Given that volunteer tour operators, and non-profits alike, center their organizations around the development of a community and its people, it is imperative that we gain a better understanding of this phenomenon. We do not yet know much about the microsociological

impacts of volunteer tourism on the host, in particular the impacts that volunteer tourism experiences can have on the way the host sees themselves and their role in society. This study aims to direct this tourist-centered attention to the life of the voluntoured. The purpose of this study is to help scholarship and volunteer tour operators better understand how the intimate nature of volunteer tourism (Conran, 2012) influences the thoughts and feelings of those who receive volunteers. It is my hope that through this case study, we have gained a better understanding of how to more responsibly plan and manage volunteer experiences abroad.

1.3 Organization of this Document

This thesis is organized in a basic layout as guided by a template provided by the Texas A&M University Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Chapter II is a literature review that attempts to provide a thorough guide to the research relevant to this study. The literature review is organized by the three main subheadings which denote stakeholders in the volunteer tourism environment: The Volunteer Tourist, The Volunteer Tour Provider, and The Voluntoured. Each of the first two sections gives a brief overview of how scholarship has evolved with the respective study areas, each begging for connections to scholarship on the host community. The third and largest section of Chapter II covers literature on the host in volunteer tourism settings, and dives into the sociological constructs involved in this study. In this section, I attempted to introduce the broadest topic first, offering the chance for you to gradually delve into the connections of volunteer tourism, intimacy, and identity. The

section begins with a review of macro-sociological research in volunteer tourism before introducing scholarship that is micro-sociological, growing increasingly focused on the host person rather than community. The final subsection allows for a clearer connection of the concepts at hand and how the research found in the literature informs my study.

In Chapter III I offer an extensive review of my study site, how I undertook the study, and how I came to understand the meanings of the data acquired. Here, I introduce the study site and attempt to give you an understanding of the who my participants were, what informed their culture, and why they made an ideal subject for this study. I addressed my data gathering methods, but also concerns of potential vulnerabilities with photo elicitation. Efforts of reflexivity and trustworthiness close out the section as I discuss my identification with the very tourists that engage with my study participants.

My findings are included in Chapter IV, along with a reflexive section. These sections help decipher the many hours of interviews obtained for this study into cohesive blocks that are organized according to the various concepts explored. The final chapter, V, helps to further refine the interview data and connects the materials more distinctively to the reviewed literature. Latter sections in Chapter V offer a summary of the findings, a critical review of my methods, and ways in which this study might inform future volunteer tourism practices and research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Defined by Wearing (2001) as a phenomenon in which tourists “volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or environment” (p. 1), it is apparent that the work of volunteer tourists leaves its mark on a variety of settings, both ecologically and anthropologically. Its prevalence in the tourism marketplace is not only driven by an increase in available expeditions, but also by the longing of the developing world’s growing middle class to find novel travel experiences (Wearing and McGehee, 2013). This has forced volunteer tourism into the minds of researchers as seen by the influx of studies undertaken in the last 15 years (e.g. Benson & Seibert, 2009; Broad, 2003; Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Coghlan, 2015; Conran, 2011; Guttentag, 2009; Higgins-Desboilles, 2003; McGehee, 2002; McGehee, 2013; McGehee, et al., 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Singh, 2002; Tomazos & Butler, 2010; Wearing, et al., 2008; Wearing & Wearing, 2006). This research has involved many different viewpoints on the phenomenon and appears to have evolved in synchrony with Jafari’s (2001) tourism research platforms (Wearing & McGehee, 2013).

At the start of the new millennium, researchers concerned with volunteer tourism became proponents of the practice, citing it as a worthy activity in which to partake (Broad, 2003; McGehee, 2002). This research generally suggested that volunteer tourists sought altruistic experiences (Callanan & Thomas, 2005). It was not long before a more cautionary platform appeared with, among others, Guttentag’s (2009) suggestion of volunteer tourism’s role in the

disruption of host economies, the reinforcement and rationalization of the ‘Other’ and the poverty they face. Perhaps this is because, unlike with mass tourism, the volunteer tourism experience involves a more intimate interaction between the host and guest (Conran, 2011). Wearing and McGehee (2013) note that while mainstream tourism saw two decades before its move to a cautionary approach, volunteer tourism witnessed its fan base whittle in less than 10 years.

With examples such as Broad’s (2003) case study of a Gibbon Rehabilitation Center, we have seen the phenomenon brought into the third phase, adaptancy. In this phase, researchers have suggested ways in which the volunteer tourism players can be more critical of themselves and work to maximize the positive and minimize the negative impacts on both the community and the consumer. Several examples can be referenced indicating a shift toward an adaptancy platform (Benson & Blackman, 2011; Broad, 2003) but a quick glance at available programs shows much work is still to be done. The scientific platform, the last of Jafari’s (2001) platforms, has become more visible in the last few years. Theory application has been prevalent in volunteer tourism since its inception, but more recently social movement theory (McGehee, 2002), development theory (Guttentag, 2009), and social capital theory (Zahra & McGehee, 2013) have aided in the continued expansion of knowledge of the intricacies of volunteer tourism. Despite these studies, Wearing and McGehee (2013) call for further theoretical application within research concerning volunteer tourism. This social research approach should meld interdisciplinary frameworks which account for the social, economic, and environmental aspects of volunteer tourism development. In doing so, scholarship will arrive at a holistic understanding

of the phenomenon and practice will be able to more effectively manage and promote volunteer programs.

2.1 The Volunteer Tourist

As with mainstream, packaged tourism, volunteer tourism maintains stakeholders in three main arenas - the touring public, the service-providing organization, and the host community, along with its residents. From a demand-side perspective, tourist motivations and the post-trip impacts on the tourist have been the main topic of discussion. Research in this light initially took an advocacy approach and accepted that the volunteer tourist set out to find altruistic experiences, those which differ from the product of mass tourism. Results have shown strong ties to altruism (Callanan & Thomas, 2005), but debate continues as egocentric motivations repeatedly appear. Callanan and Thomas (2005) were able to narrow tourist motivations into four main categories, only one of which, *making a difference*, was focused on someone or something other than the tourist self. Later, Benson and Seibert (2009) found five common themes among German volunteer tourist motivations, all of which were self-focused. These studies help decipher the true nature of volunteer trips and what the tourist hopes to achieve, whether that is enhancing one's worldview or aiding with the bonding of family members.

The motivation debate is simmered by Tomazos and Butler's (2010) suggestion of a self-interest/altruism continuum on which a volunteer tourist would fall. While their place on the continuum could be influenced by demographic differences (Carter, 2008; McGehee, Lee &

Clemmons, 2009), this research shows that the volunteer tourist, their self and motivations, differ from that seen in the mainstream. Mass and volunteer tourists are similar, however, in that their behaviors differ with relation to their age. The younger demographic is more likely to seek volunteering experiences that fulfill personal goals while the opposite is true for older volunteer tourists (Brown, 2005; Lepp, 2008).

Looking beyond the tourists' pre-trip motivations, scholars have also highlighted on the post-trip, transformative (Wearing & McGehee, 2013) nature of the volunteer tourism experience. Seen as both positive (Alexander, 2009; Bailey & Russell, 2010; Lepp, 2008) or negative (Grabowski & Wearing, 2011) the return home often inspires several changes to the life of the volunteer tourist. These changes, such as a more positive view of the self, better civic attitudes, and assertiveness, probably stem from the fact that the volunteer tourist is, "able to go beyond the superficial interactions that [mainstream] travel is often restricted to" (Broad, 2003, p. 63). Studies such as these have shown that though mainstream and volunteer tourism have similarities, the latter and its potential impacts inspires particular attention.

2.2 The Volunteer Tour Provider

Focusing still on the experiences of the tourist, Callanan and Thomas (2005) present a typology of the volunteer tourist. This typology categorizes volunteers into one of three types: shallow, intermediate, or deep. The authors suggest that travelers on the shallow-end are more extrinsically motivated compared to the altruistic-deep volunteer tourist. This typology is based

on not only motivations but also duration of the project, qualifications, and level of emphasis on the host community, which affords volunteer tourism organizations a rough segmentation of their target audience. These new, market-focused commercial operations support Wearing and Wearing's (2006) claim that the phenomenon is experiencing a process of commodification. Though volunteer tourism operators have historically been NGOs and academic groups (Wearing & McGehee, 2013), the goals of these organizations have still been centered on the program's sustenance, much like that of a for-profit operation. Research has shown that these organizations, despite their operating structure, have the potential to exist as either catalysts for positive change or facilitators of neocolonialism (Palacios, 2010).

While little research has been done on the impact of these new organizations, a search for opportunities will not leave you without results. In their annual volunteer tourism trends report, *Go Overseas* validates Wearing and Wearing's (2006) commodification concerns by listing their "Top 15 Searched Countries" with descriptions for each. These descriptions cite India's "stunning natural landscapes," Thailand's "ranking in the top 10 for most endangered mammal species," and Brazil's hosting of the 2014 FIFA World Cup (Go Overseas, 2014), all with verbiage reminiscent of typical destination marketing literature. Wearing and McGehee (2013) posit that this focus on profit will leave a very different impact on the community than those experiences provided by the non-profit sector. The gravest concern is that, "gradually, the product becomes more attuned to the experiences that are in demand rather than the needs of the destination's indigenous inhabitants" (Wearing & Wearing, 2006, p. 124). Those in the industry though, like the director of *Tourism Concern*, a now-defunct international ethical tourism advocacy organization, have already confirmed that the market is focused on profit rather than

the needs of the host community (Fitzpatrick, 2007). Arguably, research focusing on the destination community is imperative.

2.3 The Voluntoured

2.3.1 The Macrosociological Lens

Singh (2002) argues that the host community makes up the third, and most important, leg of the volunteer tourism table. Literature, however, has focused minimally on the host for reasons that Wearing and McGehee (2013) cite as lack of accessibility, language differences, and a lack of funding. Most attention that has been paid to the host has been focused on the concept from a macrosociological perspective, which helps us to understand the broad impacts of a phenomenon on a society or between societies. Such research on volunteer tourism has posited the idea as a possible means of renewed cohesion between divided societies (Higgins-Desboilles, 2003) and as an avenue for informal cultural exchanges (Broad, 2003; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007). While these constructs have also been seen as effects of mainstream tourism, researchers of volunteer tourism encourage us to look to its impacts as well (Wearing & McGehee, 2013).

Contrary to the battle of hegemonic dominance cited by tourism researchers (Wearing, et. al, 2010), the social space in volunteer tourism has been found to be a positive environment. Broad (2003) presented notions that highlighted the positive cultural exchanges that take place in a volunteer tourism setting in Thailand. Higgins-Desboilles (2003) conducted a study between aboriginal Australians and volunteer Australians that supported the potential of volunteer tourism

to mend macro-relationships tainted by the social injustices of a past generation. Positive social capital was shown to be fostered by Zahra and McGehee (2013) in their application of Flora's (2004) community capital framework. Their research showed that the interactions in volunteer tourism can create a "novelty effect" (p. 34), which could act as a means to bridging social capital. Woosnam and Lee (2011) also add to the macrosociological literature of volunteer tourism by applying the concept of social distance to the study of the phenomenon. Even still, though, we have not been able to grasp a holistic understanding of the *intimate* encounters that take place in the thirdspaces of the voluntoured host.

2.3.2 A Microsociological Gaze

The volunteer tourism experience involves a heightened and more comprehensive interaction between the host and the touring volunteer (Zahra & McIntosh, 2007). Given this and the value of interpersonal relationships between members of the host community and their volunteer visitors (Singh, 2002), it is imperative that we analyze the microsociological implications of the phenomenon. Thus far, intimacy (Conran, 2011) and social exchange theory (McGehee & Andereck, 2009) have been shown to be key microsociological concepts within the volunteer tourism experience. Contrasting the macrosociological research I mentioned previously, these microsocial constructs allow us to look at the interactions of individual community members and how they play into the social roles a person adopts. Singh (2002) notes that a deeper understanding of these intimate, yet fleeting, encounters is crucial to our understanding of tourism's impact on the host community.

Intimacy

I first explore intimacy to better understand the environment in which the host negotiates their self and the self they express to the volunteer. It is in the intimate spaces that the identities I am trying to understand are in their most formative environments (Trauer & Ryan, 2005).

It is suggested, by Piorkowski and Cardone (2000), that there are four types of intimacy: physical intimacy (through bodily contact), verbal intimacy (by the exchange of communication), spiritual intimacy (by sharing values and beliefs), and intellectual intimacy (sharing discourse of knowledge). Trauer and Ryan (2005) explored these intimacies in the context of tourism and suggested that “intimacies within a place are created by interaction with those local to that place, and [...] that intimacy and [the] meanings associated with a place emerge from the [...] nature of the interaction” (p. 482) between the host and visitor. While these intimate interactions do have macro-level implications, they are also involved in the creation of personal identities (Giddens, 1999; Urry, 2000; Williams, 2002).

The exchange of social intimacy was, in a sense, explored empirically by McGehee and Andereck (2009) when they looked at Social Exchange Theory in volunteer tourism. This theory posits that the intimate exchange is reduced to being a commercial transaction, disregarding any emotional or psychological involvement between those invested parties. This intimacy has the potential to be subject to the volunteer tourists’ self-focused motivations (Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Benson & Seibert, 2009) and result in a one-sided intimate experience. As a response to this sort of exchange, the host “may deliberately package entertainments of pseudo-intimacy designed to protect the host experience of place. The paradox is one of where commodification becomes a mechanism of the host’s intimacy” (Trauer & Ryan, 2005).

Building on these intimate relationships, Wearing and Wearing (2006) present a place in which intimacy can be found. The thirdspace, as the authors call it, gives “texture to the travel experience” (Wearing, et. al, 2010, p. 14) by facilitating the involvement of two tourist personalities, the gazing *flaneur* and the interacting *choraster*. These theoretical personalities interact with the tourism environment on two differing levels. The former takes a less intimate, spectator-type approach while the latter delves further into the situation resulting in a fuller experience of the interaction at hand. The thirdspace then, according to Wearing and Wearing (2006), is the imaginary place where these two characters intersect, thus where the holistic tourism experience occurs. The *flaneur* and *choraster* do not act independently, as research has previously examined (Wearing & Wearing, 2006), rather they “exist simultaneously, with each one containing the other” (Wearing, et. al, 2010, p. 127).

It is in this thirdspace that an intimate experience occurs. As Berlant (2000) has shown, intimacy occurs in the shared, private experience of the host and guest. Though this touristic intimacy has been discussed minimally, tourism researchers have briefly explored its relevance to our field (Conran, 2011; Sidali, Kastenholz, & Bianchi, 2013; Trauer & Ryan, 2005). Conran, in her introduction of intimacy to volunteer tourism scholarship went so far as to say that “intimacy overwhelmingly mediates the volunteer tourism experience” (2011, p. 1454). In the aforementioned thirdspaces and through the social intimacy of volunteer tourism, the tourist and host can potentially develop an identity (Berlant, 1998; Conran, 2011; Sidali, Kastenholz, & Bianchi, 2013). These identities can be defined and explored further by looking through the lens of symbolic interactionism.

Symbolic Interactionism

The symbolic interactionist ideals posit that each aspect of an interaction has a symbol, a deeper meaning, and that the self is a product and reflection of the social environment (Ziller, 1973) and varying intimate experiences. Derived with strong influence from the 20th century work of George Herbert Mead, ideas of symbolic interactionism gave way to work such as the theory of the looking-glass self (Cooley, 1902) and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), along with its constituent, the Theory of Self Categorization (Turner, 1999).

Social Identity Theory: The Self and Society

Developed as a part of Henry Tajfel and John Turner's *Social Identity Theory* (1979), the *Theory of Self Categorization* (Turner, 1999) is a latecomer to social psychological study. This thought expands on social behavior and describes the manner in which a person perceives others (as well as themselves) as members of a group. Turner's (1999) work helps us to understand how groups form, how they maintain cohesion, and how individuals see themselves within the context of a group. The theory describes self-identification in a continuous battle between "us" and "others." In this identification, a person cultivates the knowledge that they belong to a specific social group. Through this comparative process, a social identity is formed (Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

Self-categorization theory was recently introduced to volunteer tourism in a study that examined prosocial behavior and its personal benefits among volunteer tourists (Coghlan, 2015). This study gave emphasis to outgroup dynamics in the volunteer tourists and sought to explain the collective identity formation of the tourist group. The author found that the volunteer tourists

associated their own identities with the personal benefits of volunteer program participation, alluding to the self-indulgent motivations discussed earlier in this paper. This study, like many others, focuses on the social roles of the volunteer tourist as perceived from within. This social identity, though, is only partially sufficient in looking at an individual's self-concept. As Bosma and his colleagues (1994) suggest, a personal identity is of equal importance in the formation of the self. Coghlan's study is beneficial to the field in that it allows for a deeper understanding of the social interactions of the voluntourist and their host, but it cannot stand alone without the support of the third leg to the table (Singh, 2002). In our quest for a complete understanding of the role volunteer tourism plays at the microsociological level, we must turn to its impacts on the creation and maintenance of the host's personal identity (Bosma, et. al., 1994).

Identity Theory: Self-Identity, Self-Concept, and Self-Efficacy

Personal identity formation, a microsociological construct, can, like social identity, be better understood through the lens of symbolic interactionism. Theories such as the *looking-glass self* (Cooley, 1902) have inspired a focus on the individual within the concept of identity formation. Charles Cooley, who is regarded by many as the first interactionist, developed his idea of the looking-glass self in 1902, leading the way for other interactionists, like Turner, towards an understanding of self-identity formation. Cooley's (1902) idea of the looking-glass self asserts that the self-identity is inseparable from the social world and that it references the involvement of others. According to Cooley, "A self idea of this sort seems to have three principal elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification" (p.

152). Cooley then states that from early childhood, our concepts of self are such that, “In the presence of one whom we feel to be of importance, there is a tendency to enter into and adopt [...] his judgment of ourself” (p. 175). The looking-glass self-concept has been applied extensively to sociological environments but focuses mainly on its relevance to family relationships, child development, and self-esteem (Beaman, Deiner, & Svanum, 1979; Cook & Douglas, 1998; McNair, 2004). A key construct that has been applied to these studies, however, is the placing of oneself in the ‘shoes of another.’ George Herbert Mead sought inspiration from Cooley in suggesting that by taking on the perspective of the generalized other, the self is able to imagine what is expected of them or how they are seen (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2014). Through this subconscious action, the subject develops not only an identity but also a sense of empathy for others (Cooley, 1902).

Turner’s (1999) and Cooley’s (1902) notions of *self-conceptualization*, however, are simply an introduction to identity scholarship. In discovering the formation of a host identity, both poles, social and personal (Bosma, et. al., 1994), must be considered. The self is not defined by an individual *or* a social group, rather it is made up of multiple identities that are influenced by social relationships and the lenses from which they are viewed (Davis, 2014); thus, the self is better defined by an individual *and* a social group. These self-conceptions are dynamic, drawing influence across different situations and from new experiences (Stryker, 1980). Social actors often form a personal identity, and then place that identity in the role of best fit amid a social environment (Burke, 2004).

Role-taking, coined by Mead (1934) is this application of the personal identity in the social world. Like the general formation of identity, filling a role also requires the subconscious

consideration of social context; an individual's role identity may differ contingent upon the social environment (Huntington, 1957). While Mead introduced role-taking to social science, Schwalbe (1988) defined it more precisely as being a two-fold process, much like that of the looking-glass self (Cooley, 1902). In this, communicative efforts by social actors align as they attune to others' feelings and thought processes (Love & Davis, 2014). In doing so, individuals perceive themselves as being psychologically interconnected, intimate if you will, with the role they undertake (Deaux, 1996). In 1967, Stanley Coopersmith expanded on Cooley's notion and wrote that, "Each person's self-concept, to a considerable extent, is a mirror reflection of how he has been (and is) seen by others who are important to him" (p. 201). This self-concept has been defined by Coopersmith and Feldman (1974) as "beliefs, hypotheses, and assumptions that the individual has about himself" (p. 199). Self-concept has often been likened to self-esteem (Shavelson & Bolus, 1982), but some researchers see self-esteem as an *evaluation* of one's self whereas self-concept is a *description* of one's identity (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). Tafarodi & Swann (1995) introduced a more informative concept of self-esteem known as global self-esteem. With this, we are able to better understand this self-evaluation. Despite a robust discussion among sociological scholars, prior to this study, these concepts have not been applied to the dynamics of volunteer tourism.

The formation of a role identity, and a person's ability to form such an identity, is argued, like other identities, to vary across people and situations (Schwalbe, 1988). In an early study, Huntington (1957) introduced role salience among medical residents in a teaching hospital. In the presence of trained doctors, the residents took the role of "resident" but switched their role to "doctor" in the presence of nurses.

A role is, in essence, a function that a person plays in an interactive, social context. That function implies certain behaviors that an actor is expected to have. It is the *publicness* of this behavior that can increase the impact of roles and actions on an individual's self-concept (Baumeister & Tice, 1984). In this, who the individual appears to be in a public context will be internalized and eventually could *become* who they are. Unlike private events which can be ignored, public behavior will persist in others' memories and thus has been suggested to have a greater impact on self-concept. Tice (1992) suggests that on one hand, this internalization could be superficial and simply a label that was attached to the self in a particular situation and was continuously used. In contrast, if public events are actually more important to identity formation than private ones, internalization of the public experience will be more prominent. In the process of internalization, a construct central to the looking glass self (Cooley, 1902), the social actor uses others' perceptions to determine whether their actions are having the impact they seek. If not, the individual is then subconsciously encouraged to adjust their behavior until the desired response is seen.

The exploration of changing roles, changing behaviors, internalization of public experiences has been applied to work and family domains (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992), but lacks a strong presence in other public yet intimate social environments, like tourism. Intimate environments, such as those in volunteer tourism, act as spaces where these self-concepts take form.

2.3.3 *Host Identity and Volunteer Tourism*

An intimate case study approach to analyzing host identity formation will provide tourism scholars, and practitioners, with a closer look at how the presence of and interactions with a volunteer tourist will affect the host, their personal identity, and the feelings that result from these interactions. The host in a volunteer tourism environment is often of a lower socioeconomic class, from a global perspective, than that of the volunteer (Wearing, 2001). Recent research has shown us that community *visitors* can achieve a greater sense of self (Wearing, 2001), but we know little about that of the locals. Wearing and McGehee (2013) note a “glaring absence” (p. 127) of research into the volunteer tourism impacts on members of the host community. Volunteer organizations’ knowledge of these impacts, positive and negative, are crucial to the successful application of their missions. Companies that offer volunteer vacations aim to “create, nurture and sustain the wellbeing of the world’s [people]” (Global Volunteers, 2015) and subsequently foster a “world with greater mutual respect and understanding” (Projects Abroad, 2015). Their missions seemingly place the community at the forefront of their operations. In living out their purpose, it is imperative that they minimize the negative impacts to the community on whose shoulders their business is carried. The perpetuation of the Other and promotion of dependency are potential downfalls of an inconsiderate volunteer tourism program (Guttentag, 2009). Understanding how these intimate volunteer-host interactions occur and impact the latter help to minimize negative impacts noted by the author.

Finding inspiration from Cooley’s (1902) development of the looking-glass self, and role and behavior scholarship within identity theory, this study aimed to explore the hosts’ perception

of their own ‘self’ and the role played by the volunteer tourist in that perception. In doing so, the current research is driven by two main research questions: 1) How does the intimacy of volunteer tourism (Conran, 2011) and the presence of volunteer tourists help to form and maintain host personal identity? and 2) How do these identities impact the roles and lives of the host community members during the volunteer experience and after the departure of volunteer tourists? These questions allowed me to utilize an exploratory mindset in completing the metaphorical montage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) of volunteer tourism scholarship. A literal interpretation of this montage is included in this document as Appendix D. This framework is intended to enhance the connections of literature and how I arrived at the interest of this study.

The intimate environment of this study, one in which the tourist is literally welcomed into the private spaces of the host, offers us the chance to learn more about the interpersonal connections of tourism environments and how they impact the hosts’ perceptions of their selves. The qualitative approach of this study gives the attention that this crucial stakeholder deserves (Singh, 2002). Through this, light is shone upon the existential self of the voluntoured, thus, presenting the Other as robust and impregnable.

CHAPTER III

STUDY APPROACH AND METHODS

3.1 The Study Site

I gained inspiration for this project on a trip to Ethiopia in May 2015. Upon returning home, every mention of my trip to one of the world's poorest countries led to the listener asking some variation of, "Oh, you did mission work?" Since my trip was simply to see through a long-time promise of visiting a few friends in their home country, my curiosity of the popularity of mission-work and volunteer tourism remained prominent as I explored topics for my thesis. Due to limited funding, accessibility, and language barriers I was forced to seek locations outside of Ethiopia, closer to Texas, for this study.

Due to my interest in and connections to Latin America, I began to search closer to home for the ideal study site. A thorough internet search of volunteer tourism options provided countless numbers of organizations with offerings in this region. Criteria for selection were founded in purposive sampling such that I focused on "selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study" (Patton, 1990, 169). Information-rich environments for this study were those that offered *intimate* interactions between host community members and tourists, offered volunteer experiences lasting at least two days, and those organizations that held the host community at the forefront of their volunteer efforts as evidenced by their organizational goals and mission. After much research, deliberation, and many emails, the San Miguel Cooperative, a small-holder coffee farmer cooperative operating in Ciudad Vieja (San Miguel Escobar), Sacatepequez Department, Guatemala, and the rural

communities in which they operate emerged as a prime candidate for this study. A non-profit, De la Gente, served as the gatekeeper for the cooperative.

3.1.1 A Complicated History

Formally known as the Republic of Guatemala, the Latin American nation is the most populous in the region but is still known as a hotspot for biological diversity. With over 40 percent of its population identifying as one of its several indigenous ethnicities, the human population too is one of the most diverse in the region. To allow for a deeper understanding of this study and these people, I will now provide a brief, and admittedly depthless, overview of the geopolitical, ethnic, and historical context in which we are inquiring.

The territory now known as Guatemala was once the core of the Mayan civilization, which then extended across a large portion of Mesoamerica. Though the Mayan civilization was prominent, an alleged drought and subsequent famine led to their collapse in 900 AD (Gill, 2000). Guatemala was then filled with strategically located, regional kingdoms, such as the Itza and the Tz'utujil. These new kingdoms, formed by surviving populations of Mayan peoples, were located near water sources and among hilltops for defense purposes. Though some groups, such as the K'iche' were particularly aggressive, most lived in relative isolation for the next 600 years. When it came time to defend these hilltops, Mayan war tactics, which were aimed at seizure of captives rather than destruction of the enemy, proved unsuccessful. Their livelihoods would be severely suppressed in the 16th century as European powers sought to strengthen their presence in the New World (Foster, 2000).

The region's geography, however, presented hardships for colonial governors. The many volcanos, naturally-dammed lakes, and fault lines forced the designation of several ruling cities in a period of just over 200 years (Foster, 2000). Upon its designation of a Captaincy General of the Spanish Empire, Tecpan Guatemala acted as the capital city. This city was located too closely to the Kaqchikel capital city, Iximché, and was thus attacked by the Kaqchikel. This forced a relocation of the capital to Ciudad Vieja (San Miguel Escobar), the same city in which my data collection took place. This city was flooded, the territory designated a new capital, Antigua Guatemala, only to see it destroyed by earthquakes. The Spanish found relief in their final relocation of the capital to its current location in the Ermita Valley. The geography that led to the city's initial demise is the same geography that is responsible for its success as one of the world's most productive coffee-growing regions.

Since the departure of the Spanish as a colonial force, the dissolution of the Federal Republic of Central America, and the instilment Guatemala's newfound independence in 1821, the people of Guatemala have been subject to slavery, dictatorships, U.S.-backed military coups, and bloody massacres (Smith, 1996). After a brief period of democratic ruling in the mid-20th Century, various foreign factions forced the country into a 36-year civil war. This war, which ended in 1996 with intervention from the United Nations, was fought between leftist rebels and the Guatemalan government backed by capitalistic powers of the United States and what is now known as Chiquita Brands International (Smitha, 2015). Intervention in Guatemala, and other nations of Latin America, by the United States' intelligence community was inspired by the Monroe Doctrine (Smith, 1996). Its work towards pushing out the colonial powers of Europe, establishing American hegemony throughout the Central America, would endure for decades to

follow. Foreign intervention, colonial strongholds, and civil war would ultimately decimate hundreds of thousands of civilians and indigenous peoples and would displace thousands of Guatemalans (Smitha, 2015), many of whom fled to southern Mexico.

In 1996, when the civil war ultimately ceded to United Nations peace efforts (Miller, 2011), social development and economic revitalization in Guatemala began. Today, Guatemala has the largest economy in Central America, but suffers from many social injustices. As a result, it remains one of the poorest nations in the world, with a GDP of half that of the average country in Central America (CIA Factbook, 2016). The CIA, according to their reputable World FactBook, considers 54% of the Guatemalan population to be living in poverty (CIA Factbook, 2016). This has encouraged remittances, mostly originating in the United States, which have grown to be Guatemala's largest single source of foreign income. It is these more recent occurrences, and its proximity to the United States, that have made Guatemala a prime destination for volunteer tourism.

3.1.2 A Hodgepodge of Culture

As with the rest of Latin America, the modern Guatemalan culture is an eclectic mix of indigenous, colonial, and post-colonial influences. There is still a steep contrast, however, in the cultural practices and norms between the poor Mayan villagers in the highlands and the *ladinos*, the relatively wealthy mestizos who populate the region's urban and suburban areas (Rainsford,

2011). The diversity of Guatemala relative to its geographic neighbors is partially evident by referring to Figure 1¹.



Figure 1: Diversity of Guatemala

This diversity is continuously evident as you uncover its more tangible cultural products, food and the arts. Both its culinary and artistic traditions have regional differences which help give each village its own cultural identity (Gibbons & Ashdown, 2010). Some holidays encourage the consumption of particular items, as do certain days of the week (Shea, 2001). Unlike the culinary traditions, modern-day Guatemalan music and arts trace their beginnings to

¹ Map was made with the interactive tool found at <http://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org/cDQLAAssrhqEI0x4go244W/>

influences after the collapse of the Mayan civilization (Shea, 2001). Culturally-speaking, this is perhaps the greatest legacy left by the Colonial era.

This same period of colonial rule also brought higher education to Mesoamerica. The Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (USAC) was established in 1676 as a pontifical institution and was designed to not only enhance the region's educational capacity but also spread the knowledge and teaching of the Catholic church (Pavón Romero, 2003). Founded to be the most prestigious institution of higher education in Central America, the values set forth by the presence of USAC played a vital role in ensuring free primary education of Guatemalans upon establishing independence (Pavón Romero, 2003). Education numbers in Guatemala are also strengthened by a vast number of NGOs, faith-based and otherwise, dedicated to educating local populations. The historical university, USAC, is still operational today and served as the local institution which provided the final approval for my study and consent documents.

3.1.3 A Neocolonial and Postcolonial Critique of Tourism: A Critical Caveat

With a history just as complex as that of Central America, what we know today as Guatemala deserves a much larger portion of this thesis than I am prepared to provide. My probe into the vast histories of colonialism, ethnic relations, and the resulting, modern dynamics pare in comparison to the amount of inquiry surrounding such topics. To delve into the postcolonial identities of my hosts and obtain a critical view takes much more time and trust, something that was outside the scope of this project. Even still, it is important to note a few historical underpinnings to give us yet an even stronger foundation in understanding this study.

For some time now, postcolonial discourse has made its way through many subject areas within tourism studies. Those inquiries in less-developed countries often offer concerns of not only postcolonial identities, but also the many implications of the convergence of people who abide by different cultural, political, and economic norms (Tucker & Akama, 2009). Tucker and Akama (2009) claim, however, that most of this research takes a host-centered stance *against* Westernism in defense of the preservation of local cultures and norms. The same authors also suggest that due to the nature of the tourism phenomenon, “it is the emphasis on being critical of the colonial condition that is of particular relevance [...]” (2009, p. 507). The same is true for thoughts of postcolonialism within studies concerning volunteer tourism. The intimate encounters within volunteer tourism (Conran, 2012) begs such a critical approach that no one particular study will suffice.

Before volunteer tourism was acknowledged as a phenomenon, others like it appeared in geopolitical spaces. After centuries of colonization and imperialism, we saw the use of *development* come into common speech. In the mid-twentieth century, the post-war mindset of globalization inspired a mentality of foreign relations that positioned the Allies as protectors of a new world order. In this, and with the best of intentions, we saw the formation of the peace corps (Cobbs Hoffman, 1997). We saw the imposition of western ideals on the non-west, ideals that our path to success must be emulated and seen throughout the world. These “good works” were in the form of not only newly economized aid (Cobbs Hoffman, 1997) but also involved sending government sponsored volunteers to areas that were deemed inadequate by the leading authority. Criticism followed shortly due to the colonial traits of these new relationships.

As society progressed, these programs continued, as did the criticism. Researchers' initial concerns of volunteer tourism, which I covered in Chapter I, fell right in line with critics of previous attempts at foreign aid through volunteering. This argument was best made by Brown and Hall, first cited by Palacios (2010):

The use of volunteers, who often have little knowledge or experience of the work they are undertaking (an attraction for the volunteers), also calls into question their ineffectiveness and raises the specter of neo-colonialism in the tacit assumption that even ignorant Westerners can improve the lot of the people in the South (2008, p. 845).

Volunteer tourism, then, could be an example of a postcolonial version of the very atrocities endured in the centuries past (Palacios, 2010). By acknowledging this, understanding the dynamics informing this study, and applying what we learn to practice, I hope we can avoid colonialistic relationships between the Other and their visitors and inspire encounters that breed positivity and prosperity.

3.1.3 My Host Community

My thorough internet search of volunteer tourism options provided countless numbers of organizations with offerings in the region. Criteria for selection were founded in purposive sampling such that researchers focused on “selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (Patton, 2002). Information-rich environments for this study were those that offered intimate interactions between host community members and tourists, offered volunteer experiences lasting longer than one day and those organizations that held the host community at the forefront of their volunteer efforts as evidenced by their organizational goals and mission.

I reached out to dozens of volunteer tourism organizations around the world but focused on regions in which I had personal connections or knew the language, making my on-site presence a bit easier. I also focused my search on those organizations offering the opportunity for experiences that allowed the tourist to be alongside community members. Volunteer experiences such as Habitat for Humanity, where the volunteers perform a task or complete a project without an intimate experience with the host were excluded. Experiences like Doctors Without Borders, in which the volunteers were offered minimal personal interactions with the host outside of the task for which they were volunteering, were also excluded.

Ultimately, I determined that the environment that best fit to help answer the research questions, of those accessible to me, was a small-holder coffee farming cooperative based in Ciudad Vieja. My participants were members of the San Miguel de Escobar Cooperative, a local farming cooperative. Ciudad Vieja (Figure 2) is located 6.2 km Southwest of Antigua in the Guatemalan department of Sacatepéquez. According to the 2002 official Guatemalan census, Ciudad Vieja had a population of just over 25,000. The newest counts show this population to now be between 30,103 and 45,669, among the highest within Sacatepéquez. The department of Sacatepéquez has more favorable data when compared to other areas of Guatemala, with lower levels of illiteracy and healthy birth and death rates (Instituto Nacional de Estadística Guatemala, 2013). Despite being adjacent to the capital department, Sacatepéquez does not, however, have the lowest levels of poverty and extreme poverty (Instituto Nacional de Estadística Guatemala, 2013). From within the department, the Ciudad Vieja subdivision too has relatively favorable data.

Volunteers with the San Miguel de Escobar cooperative were offered experiences in which they helped with specific tasks for the farmers, including, but not limited to, daily farming duties and special projects, but were also able to spend personal time with the farmer and their families. These experiences offered an environment that maintained the visitor's role as a volunteer, but also offered the opportunity for intimate interactions that ranged from dinner with the farmer and their family to taking a long walk to work on the rural farm. Considering my other criteria for selection, I had extensive experience traveling within Latin America and have a strong foundation in understanding the Spanish language. These both made my travel and interviews easier.



Figure 2: Study Location

My contact with the San Miguel cooperative was facilitated through a Guatemala-based non-profit called De la Gente. While De la Gente retains office space in Massachusetts, its leaders spend most of their days in the Guatemalan office. The three pillars guiding De la Gente's operations are its coffee, cooperative assistance with farmers, and community tourism efforts. While the focus of this study is the farmers and their farming cooperative, our understanding would be incomplete without delving into the multi-faceted relationship between De la Gente and the cooperative.

Founded in 2005 as As Green as it Gets, De la Gente acts as a facilitator for the success of farming communities in Guatemala's San Miguel de Escobar region, just outside of Antigua Guatemala. On a volunteer trip to the region, Franklin Voorhes met farmers who labored to sell their coffee for a meager \$.10 per pound. Franklin was inspired and sought to help the farmers reap the true economic value of their crop. He taught the farmers how to spend their coffee fruit into marketable roasted coffee and facilitated loans that gave the cooperative access to more farm land and processing machinery (De la Gente, 2015). Since Franklin's first coffee sales, the cooperative has grown to 30 farmers that collectively exported over 65,000 pounds of roasted coffee in 2012. What would have previously earned the farmers less than \$7,000 in a year, has injected over \$150,000 into the local economy (De la Gente, 2015).

By offering farmer training programs, volunteer programs, tours, and consumer connections, De la Gente lives out their mission of working "with farming communities to create economic opportunity that improves the quality of life for their families and community" (De la Gente, 2015). De la Gente grew inspiration for their work in Guatemala due to the abundance of

'high-quality' coffee beans grown by subsistence farmers who, according to their website, live in poverty. These small-holder coffee farmers are susceptible to natural disasters, global price shocks, and denial of access to credit, adding further to their vulnerability. Binding together as a cooperative has helped to stabilize these threats and improve the farmers' presence on the global coffee stage. Some threats, however, are not easily managed.

An increased presence of *Roya*, more commonly known as coffee leaf rust, has forced some Guatemalan farmers to forfeit up to 90% of their coffee plants (De la Gente, 2015). The resurgence of *Roya*, blamed on the warm weather of a changing climate, has resulted in hundreds of thousands of jobs lost in Central America since 2012. NPR (2014) chronicles the story of a Guatemalan farmer who fled the country after his crop was wiped out by the fungus. The farmer was caught in Arizona, sent back to Guatemala, and is now in debt and struggling to make ends meet. It is stories like these that have encouraged the efforts of De la Gente and its volunteers in Guatemala.

Unlike many multi-destination volunteer organizations, De la Gente focuses solely on the communities in Guatemala and the well-being of its farmers and artisans. Through their focus on "both sides of the cup" (De la Gente, 2015), the organization promotes that they focus not only on the well-being and empowerment of the farming communities but also on the cross-cultural encounters provided by their coffee tours and group volunteering trips. Since forming, De la Gente has expanded to assisting with farming cooperatives across Guatemala. While preparing for this study, I was made to believe that De la Gente serves a crucial role in coffee production as well as in the daily operations of the cooperative. As I interacted with De la Gente and with the farmers they represent, I came to learn that the cooperative is an independent organization, run

entirely by its member farmers. De la Gente serves, in a sense, as its marketing partner and as a business consultant, encouraging sound financial decisions made by the cooperative. De la Gente markets and sells not only the coffee, but also the volunteer tourism experiences.

Earning Tripadvisor's Certificate of Excellence in 2014 and 2015, De la Gente is among several organizations in the Antigua region that connect tourists to the area's prominent coffee-farming community. Their community tours allow travelers the chance to "meet and interact with real Guatemalans" and ensure that profits from your tour will "make a difference to that person and community" (De la Gente, 2015). These programs allow tourists the chance to "meet farmers and artisans and work alongside them in their homes, as you create your own souvenir, not to mention memories to last a lifetime." De la Gente connects tourists with farmers in various environments. Some tourists only see the De la Gente office and a farm while others stay in the farmers' homes, conversing and dining with the farmer and their families (De la Gente, 2015). These tours and workshops which range from coffee tours to burlap bag workshops, provide visitors to Guatemala what all volunteer tourism organizations tout, the opportunity for novel experiences and the chance to give back. They offer, as the De la Gente website puts it, "a week of volunteering for a lifetime of change." These comments, made directly on the De la Gente website, positions the organization alongside volunteer tourism experiences that have been subjects of inquiry in past studies.

The Group Volunteering page on www.dlgcoffee.org provides further insight on why these experiences were a good fit for this study. They state that these trips provide the groups with "cultural exchange" and "meaningful interaction with farmers and their families and the chance to build relationships that will last a lifetime" (De la Gente, 2015). These groups will

"spend as much time with community members as possible, allowing for space for reflection and discussion, and giving people the opportunity to [...] experience what life is like for those struggling in an unfair system" (De la Gente, 2015).

This study took place over six weeks surrounding the arrival and departure of a volunteering group in June 2016. The group of volunteers, who were visiting Guatemala from the United States, was pre-arranged by De la Gente and not influenced by my study. I had no contact with the volunteer group. The timing of this study was planned around the group, with the help of De la Gente, as it best fit with the farmers' schedules. This multi-day group experience allowed for the intimate community interactions above as well the "chance to be a little touristy during a week of hard work" (De la Gente, 2015). Among these activities marketed were a hike to a coffee field, a coffee processing workshop, and dinner with a farmer in their own home. The twelve group members also participated in learning activities as well as a construction project while they visit the farmers in the community. While the study surrounded these groups' visit, the interview questions were broad-based to include the farmers' interactions with all volunteers.

3.2 Data Gathering

In a quest to examine host identity and confidence impacts of a theoretically void phenomenon (McGehee, 2012), a qualitative approach was deemed as most beneficial. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) argue our point in saying that "qualitative research was born out of concern

to understand the ‘Other’” (p. 2). I hoped to do just that with this study. This interpretive approach is also consistent with prior research done in volunteer tourism environments (see Broad, 2003; Wearing, 2001). Searching for the most robust data, a multiple methods (Hoffman, 2009) approach was taken to collect data. In using multiple methods, I attempted to triangulate the data in an effort to obtain a thorough comprehension of host identity in volunteer tourism. Methods undertaken included interviews and photo elicitation. Participant observations were intended to play a role in the triangulation process, but when I arrived in Ciudad Vieja it was clear this was not ideal. Due to the intimate nature of the volunteer experience, any additional people, particularly a peering researcher, would have a vast impact on the results. These methods were adapted in an emergent design of data collection. Given the qualitative nature of this study, I was forced to adapt to local conditions, language, and expectations which encouraged constant visitation of the methods and questions used. As I enveloped myself in the experiences of the host, I adapted my interview guide to follow the natural lineage of local conversation.

As principal investigator and author of this study, I arrived at the study site two weeks prior to commencement of the volunteer tourism experience. This allowed for an adjustment period whereby I became immersed in the local environment. While settling into the Antigua area, I was able to find a home to rent. I then associated myself with the locations of grocery stores, office supply shops, restaurants, and familiarized myself with other resources I might need. During this time, interviews with De la Gente personnel were conducted and my introduction to and first few discussions with the interpreter took place. The composition of my reflexive diary also began at this time and continued until the end of the data collection period.

Table 1 gives a list of all twelve study participants with a description of each farmer to help us better understand them without providing pieces of identification. Due to the informality of our discussions with the farmers, some information was not able to be obtained within the data collection time frame.

Table 1: Participants in this Study

Informant #	Farmer Description
I	Female, 30-40 years old, new farmer
II	Male, 40-50 years old, previously lived and worked in Guatemala City
III	Male, 40-50 years old previously lived and worked in Guatemala City
IV	Male, 50-60 years old,
V	Male, 40-50 years old, founding cooperative member, made special coffee
VI	Male, 50-60 years old,
VII	Male, 30-40 years old, Farmer as second job for now - works full-time in a “chicken bus” fabrication shop
VIII	Male, 67 years old, founding cooperative member
IX	Female, 30-40 years old, Wife (of husband and wife farmer team)
X	Male, 40-50 years old,
XI	Male, 40-50 years old,
XII	Female, 40-50 years old,

3.2.1 A Local Interpreter

While at the study site, I sought assistance from an interpreter. In choosing an interpreter, I used guidelines presented by Squires (2009) that are designed to help with the trustworthiness of qualitative research studies that examine constructs in cross-lingual spaces. Criteria for this interpreter were, among others, someone with sociolinguistic language competence of both English and the local tongue and one that has familiarization with the host community. This familiarization not only helped with the interpretation of interview data but also allowed for a greater sense of trust between me, the interviewer, and interviewee (Squires, 2009). I aimed to interview *with* the interpreter rather than *through* them so that the interpreter acted as a ‘key informant’ (Edwards, 1998) in the research. This ensured that the interpreter was ‘visible’ (Edwards, 1998) in the data collection process.

Following Squires’ (2009) suggestions, the interpreter, Joe, was interviewed to reveal his own life experiences, his relationship with the host community, and issues he saw as important to the research questions. I will elaborate on this interview in the chapters that follow. After this ‘induction’ (Edwards, 1998), Joe was considered a full member of the research team. This did, however, leave concern for the role that Joe played in the interview. While all efforts were taken to ensure his honesty and integrity, such efforts can sometimes fall short. I have enough (basic conversational) knowledge of the Spanish language. This alone gave me the ability to not act as the recipient of what Joe was saying, rather I was able to focus on the hosts’ responses, relying on him to clarify phrases which I could not comprehend and those that were culturally unique. Having Joe with me during these interviews allowed me to inquire at the deeper thoughts and emotions within the host. Joe was not an employee of De la Gente, rather is called on by them

when interpreting is needed. He knew the farmers intimately, their lives, and their families. Without this connection through Joe, it is possible that the farmers would not have been as open, trusting, and vulnerable in answering my questions.

3.2.2 The Interview Process: Photo Elicitation

To gain a more holistic understanding of the institutional environment in which the voluntoured community resides, I first administered interviews with key De la Gente organization personnel. In this, I hoped to gain a better understanding of their history in the region, their work with the community, and their philosophies in obtaining organizational goals and objectives. The interpreter and I then proceeded to interview host community members. Individual participants were selected in a purposive manner, similar to the selection of the study site, based on their involvement with volunteer tourists. Only those community members that worked extensively with volunteer tourists were considered for participation. This selection process was designed to keep the intimacy (Conran, 2011) of the volunteer tourism experience at the forefront of this study.

Interviews for this study fell under the guise of photo-elicitation. The selected interview respondents were given single-use film cameras prior to the volunteers' arrival and were asked to take pictures of whatever they wished throughout the course of the volunteer tourism experience. The photos were developed in Antigua at a Kodak-branded photo store, one copy of each photo was printed for respective farmer and one copy was saved onto a USB flash-drive for my later use. These photos were given to the farmers in their sealed envelopes and used as departure points during the participants' interviews to help understand the hosts' perceptions of their

experience (Oware, Diefes-Dux, & Adams, 2007; Morley, et al., 2011). The photos were seen first by the farmer as they opened the envelope in the first few minutes of each interview. By using photo elicitation, I aimed to grasp rich data on the lived experience of the host community member and help to draw out the scope of and go beyond the spoken word of interviews (Collier, 1967). The photos collected made it easier to recreate the thoughts and feelings of the host during the volunteer tourism experience and how they relate to the identity formation processes – for the host, the photos will not be just *of* something, rather they are *about* something (Carlsson, 2001).

The protocol for this photo elicitation interview strategy draws from Hatten, Forin, and Adams (2013) in their application of photo elicitation in cross-disciplinary identity development. The photo elicitation participants were given instructions as to how to conduct their picture-taking activities. The instructions were broad so as to allow for minimal intervention of the researchers into the decisions of the participants. These instructions were given verbally alongside the interpreter in the first few days of my on-site presence – the English translation of these instructions is as follows:

For this interview, our focus is on learning more about who you are and the experiences that have shaped the way you think, act, and see yourself in the world and in relation to others. We are interested in learning about your experiences with the foreign volunteers.

To do this, we will use pictures that you take that represent something important to you. These pictures may be in any form – self-portraits, graphic images, pictures of friends, family, homes, co-workers, projects, favorite places, your community, etc. We hope to be able to see your experiences as you do while the volunteers are with you. There are no right or wrong pictures.

The pictures we will ask you to provide for this interview will be held confidential and viewed only by the researchers of this study. The pictures will be used solely for the purpose of our next interview to elicit responses to questions that we have and talk through the interview.

When referencing the resulting pictures in interviews, it was not enough for me to ask them to describe their pictures, though that will be the first step. The more in-depth questions focused on what the picture represents and its meaning to the respondent (Carlsson, 2001). Discussion of each picture aimed to illuminate the photo's background (e.g. why it was taken?, under what circumstances was it taken?, and how the respondent felt while it was being taken?). Peering beyond these preliminary answers, the researchers hoped to understand the meanings and significance of different activities and thoughts and how these are ingrained in the experience of the host (Hatten, et al., 2013).

In the interview, I focused on the subjective importance of the public interactions of the volunteer and host. Borrowing still from Cooley's (1902) thoughts on the looking glass self, interview questions looked to the public behavior of the host, the internalization of this behavior, and the interactions' implications on the hosts' view of themselves. In this, concerns of reputation, accountability, and social relationships (Tice, 1992) will also be explored. Examples of questions that served as a guide to the photo elicitation interviews are included in this document as Appendix A.

As described, interviews with community members were informal, semi-structured, and 'active' (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) to allow for a conversation-like environment. I borrowed from marketing scholarship in their use of a 'Laddering Technique' (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988), also known as *probing*, to elicit deeper, more profound responses that allowed for a better

comprehension of the feelings and attitudes of the respondent. This aided in the interviewees' progression of self-awareness, leading to novel insights and more robust data. This, inspired by Collier and Collier's (1986) work, helps to develop reflexivity on the part of the host. I, the lead researcher, along with my interpreting assistant, Joe, played several roles that extend beyond 'interviewer.' In keeping with the proposed multiple methods (Hoffman, 2009) approach, I made reflexive diary entries after each interview experience and made voice-recorded notes. Some post-interview recordings included a debrief with my interpreter. All interactions, with study participants and with the interpreter, in this stage of the research were voice-recorded for later analysis. This, alongside the aforementioned diary resulted in a holistic recollection of the volunteer-host interactions.

The Host Gaze, Notions of Power, and the Photo Interview

Alternative forms of tourism, those whose qualities contrast that of mass touring, involves the development and support of local economies in efforts to minimize leakages brought on by multi-national enterprises and expatriate labor (Koch et al., 1998). This focus on community, community participation, and the defiance of Western power embodies all that volunteer tourism aims to achieve. Through considerate NGOs, such as De la Gente in Guatemala, power is placed into the hands of the host with the support of the seemingly altruistic tourist. Our research agendas, however, perpetuate the notions of Western power in postcolonial communities. With the overwhelming majority of research on volunteer tourism conducted through the eyes of the Western tourist, it is imperative that scholars make greater efforts to capture the lived experiences of the host through a lens mostly void of Western influence.

Foucault (1982) introduces power as a complex and dynamic form of agency and resistance through his description of power as a relation. In this, each subject is the object of power but also has the ability to exercise power. Power is not only something from which we can fall victim but also something through which we can victimize. Butin (2001, p.169) clarifies, “The individual is not passively made by power but makes herself by being able to resist within power relations.” Borrowing from the Foucauldian idea of relational power allows the power of the host to be explored and furthers our journey beyond the colonialistic mindset. The postcolonial agenda allows us to focus tourism research on the non-western host and enhance our understanding of the multi-faceted host-tourist interaction. Listening for the voice of the voluntoured leads to alternative discussions that challenge the notions of modern Western discourse (Dirlik, 1994). Foucault (1980) explains that “each society has its regimes of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is the type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true” (p. 131). This subjectivity of the gaze of an experience lent me inspiration in attempting to understand the voluntoured self through an alternative lens. Through the literal lens of a camera I was able to better understand the metaphorical lens of the host self.

The camera played a fundamental role in the objectification and ‘othering’ of the host life (Pattison, et al., 2013; Edwards, 1996). Touristic practices of photography have perpetuated ethnic and racial stereotypes, reinforcing notions of Western power over the colonized (Ryan, 1997; Whittaker, 2009). Describing the inherent generalization of photographic subjects and how the practice builds touristic expectations of the authentic, Enwezor (2006) says that the decontextualizing nature of photography turns the activity into a “mythology factory” (p. 15). I, like Pattison, et al., (2013), argue that the camera may be utilized by different social actors so as

to embody the Foucauldian notion of alternative power relations. The camera then, in the hands of the host, becomes a tool of resistance to Western hegemony (Pattison, et al., 2013) and allows the participant to not be researched but to play a vital role in the research project (Gotschi et al., 2009), exploring and uncovering the meaning of experiences alongside the researcher.

With these concerns, my use of photo elicitation was not the only method considered. In an effort to best examine the lived experience of the host throughout the volunteer tourism interaction, I also considered semi-structured interviews and allowing the host to keep a reflexive diary. After much consideration, and conversations with residents in Guatemala, I determined diaries to not be fit for the context. The potential respondents have varying levels of education, which raised concerns of their literacy. Representatives with De la Gente informed me that it is not safe to assume that all those involved in the study would be comfortable with keeping an in-depth diary. A focus on photo elicitation provided a similar ability to document thoughts and feelings (Carlsson, 2001), without depending on a literate mind. Since the distribution of cameras and my interviews was spread six weeks apart, this method, and the resulting media, served as a memory database through which the host was able to capture thoughts and emotions that were revisited in the interview. Using only interviews as the conversation tool, I would have been ill-equipped to engage myself fully with the host experience. The photographs served as “beacons of personal memory” (Cloke & Pawson, 2008, p. 16) that enable the host to construct their feelings and make them visible (Radley & Taylor, 2003).

Photo elicitation, sometimes referred to as respondent-led photography or participatory photography, was introduced to qualitative inquiry by Collier (1957) and has been used in various capacities particularly those involving women, children, and minority groups (Wang,

1999; Epstein, Stevens, McKeever, & Baruchel, 2006; Cappello, 2005), those confined to hospitals (Olliffe & Bottorff, 2007; Radley & Taylor, 2003), and as a way to study the lives of the homeless (Wang, 2003). Used widely in sociological settings such as research on symbolic interactionism and identity (Jenkins, Woodward, & Winter, 2008; Clark-Ibáñez, 2004; Hatten, et al., 2013), photo elicitation gave me the opportunity to peer into the thoughts and feelings (Carlsson, 2001) of the host.

In the last decade, this informative research method has been used sporadically in tourism and community development contexts. Through photos, communities have been given a voice in development projects (Wu & Pearce, 2014), they have been able to express their concerns and perceptions of tourism (Croes, Lee, & Olsen, 2013; Brickell, 2012; Bignante, 2010), and the meaning of place has been illuminated with populations whose livelihood depends on tourism (Kerstetter & Brickner, 2009; Amsden, et al., 2011). Two recent photo elicitation studies have particular similarities to my study in Guatemala. Gotschi, Delve, and Freyer (2009) looked at the social relationships of small-holder farmer groups in South Africa in a study with very similar context to my work in Guatemala. Though the study doesn't involve tourism or tourists, the researchers gave farmers cameras for their use over 14 days in an effort to understand the social dynamics of farmer groups, the social capital within the communities, and each farmers' own perspective of these concepts. Gotschi et al. (2009) discussed the potential negative aspects of using photography with village leaders but the leaders had no concerns large enough to terminate the project. Ultimately, the researchers found that the farmers used the cameras, an entirely new technology to them, in culturally appropriate ways.

Gotschi et al. (2009) found that the use of cameras turned “abstract discussions into concrete and comprehensive reality” (p. 305) and that the pictures “not only stimulated communication within the [research] group [...], they also allowed the researcher to see the [social] groups from the perspective of the farmers themselves” (p. 306). In another similar case, Pattison, et al., (2013) looked to photo elicitation interviews to illuminate the thoughts, feelings and experiences of a rural Gambian community with tourism and tourists. In this study, like in mine, the hosts’ gaze upon the tourist is at the forefront of the literature foundation. Pattison, et al., (2013) armed 16 Gambian hosts with cameras to be used over a period of 10 days. These cameras were used by the host to document their experiences with and among tourists in the recently established Tumani Tenda tourism camp. At the study’s outset, Pattison, et al., (2013) embraced the novel participatory photography method and found that in letting the host guide the interview through their photography, the discussion brought “attention to objects, spaces, and practices that may be overlooked in the researcher-directed interview process” (p.108). Each of these studies have been implemented to grasp a deeper, more holistic understanding of the experiences, thoughts, and perceptions of people in situations that concern their livelihood. Though this method has been used in social interactionism, identity research, and host experiences, photo elicitation had not yet been used in following the host identity throughout the host-tourist interaction.

Given my moderately participatory role (Howell, 1972) in the hosts’ experience, the cameras served an indispensable role in my study. This did not, however, leave concern for ensuring no harm is brought to the host community. It is important to reiterate that the participating farmers were given a brief introduction of their role in this project and the role of

the cameras. The goal was for the farmers to see their photography as a descriptor, not *of* something but rather *about* something (Carlsson, 2001). Despite my efforts, I had concerns that the respondents might not understand entirely what they should capture in the photographs. Overall, their photos were relevant and very helpful for the interviews. Clark-Ibáñez (2004) expressed concern that the respondent might regret taking the photo and they might have taken a different photo to capture their feelings without the presence of a researcher. Concerns also arose in the interview process as this was likely the first time the respondents had thought about or discussed these abstract constructs. I feared this could lead to confusion or hesitation to continue the interview. With this in mind, respondents were continuously reminded that they were able to end the interview at any time or were welcome to decline to respond to any particular question. The farmers, however, were receptive to all my questions and appeared comfortable throughout the interviews.

Contrasting these concerns, Meo (2010) shares an in-depth discussion on the benefits of the photo elicitation interview. These benefits include (a) a longer, more enjoyable interview that also helps to alleviate fatigue seen in regular interviews (Collier, 1967), (b) an enhanced level of control for the interviewee, especially with their ability to keep certain topics (or photos) private, (c) the ability to gather richer data which allows for a closer look at what or whom is important to the respondent and (d) the emergence of topics that would have been otherwise uncovered without photos. The photographs facilitated rapport (Harper, 2002) between me, the interpreter, and the respondent which enhanced the comfort of the interview and seemed to establish trust (Bignante, 2009). We experienced the same jokes and laughter that Meo (2010) cited as results of discussing experiences captured in the photographs.

My respondent-led methodology allowed “potential for capturing and analyzing people’s perceptions” (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004, p. 391). This capturing and revealing of experiences was be at the heart of my study. As Harper (2002, p.24) puts it, “when two or more people discuss the meaning of photographs, they try to figure out something together. This is, I believe, an ideal model for research.”

3.3 Methods of Analysis

Usually data collection and analysis are undertaken and described separately, however Sarah Pink (2004) provides a new lens through which to see the two:

[...] it is difficult to separate research and analysis. Analysis is often ongoing as research proceeds and researchers develop understandings of informants and their social and cultural worlds, even if this involves no formal or overt analytical methods. This might include reflexive analysis of the process and relationships through which knowledge is being produced, viewing of photographs and videotapes as a basis from which to develop further questions for the research and for the informants [...] The analysis of such materials will then feed back into research, enriching the knowledge base upon which the project can proceed and inspire new questions (p. 400).

In this, Pink encourages us to think reflexively about our analysis and to not draw such a clear line of distinction between data collection and analysis. Therefore, in the present study analysis did not begin after the data was collected, rather the data evaluation began during the interview, adding substance to the resulting interview data. In doing so, the host acted not only as a source for data but also as a means of analysis (Jenkins, Woodward, & Winter, 2008). In the

final research presentation, I will share reflexive accounts of this analysis so as to show how in-depth questions in the conversational interview came about.

In the post-interview analysis, the photographs were not my focus as they do not necessarily provide insight into the constructs at hand (Collier & Collier, 1986), rather it was the transcribed discourse of the interview that will aid in the understanding of the hosts' experiences. The first step in my analysis of interview data was transcription, this transcription was made, in both Spanish (the native tongue of Guatemala) and English with significant assistance from my hired interpreter. With my basic conversational knowledge of the Spanish language, this transcription, like the interviews, involved discussion between the interpreter and me. I was able to clarify any abnormal translations, thus confirming the legitimacy of his work as the project's interpreter. The interview transcripts were only fully translated upon including the excerpts in this paper. Once the transcriptions were completed, help from Joe was minimal as my knowledge of the Spanish language was adequate for reading and coding the data. All analysis was done while the transcripts were in Spanish to avoid any potential mistranslations from affecting the perceived emotional and verbal responses of the farmers. This analysis took place during my data collection experience, which each interview aided the succeeding interviews, as well as after the interviews were transcribed.

Interview data has required intense analysis as we elicited "both subjective emotions, thoughts and reflections, as well as patterns in the cultural and social construction of reality" (Cederholm, 2004, p. 240). After its transcription, I turned to developing analytic themes purveyed throughout the free-flowing text (Ryan & Bernard, 2000) of the interview using a method of constant comparison. I color coded the data to categorize emergent themes. Once

these themes emerged, I reevaluated the data with consideration of these themes. This method is closely aligned with how Ryan and Bernard (2000) describe a taxonomic analysis. After this attempt at analysis, I found my resulting notes and comments to be not closely aligned with the goals of this project. I was not able to adequately answer my research questions. Because of the conversation-like nature of these interviews, there were many things brought up by the farmers that made for a lively conversation but added little with regard to questions surrounding topics such as identity and self-concept. These aspects of conversation distracted my initial analysis. To help keep my analysis on topic, I started over with a completely new approach. I constructed a table inspired by my Interview Guideline table seen in Figure 1 that made room for comments on each topic. This new analysis table is shown as Appendix C.

Considering that my personal preference for notes-taking and analyzation is pen and paper, I printed 12 copies of this table, one for each interview. My goals were not to fill every row of each interview's table, but rather to use the rows as a guide to keep my analysis on topic. Using each table as space for commentary and noting relevant answers, I read through the printed transcripts, with the recorded interview being cast through a speaker. This allowed me to relive the experiences of the interview, laughing when a joke is told and remembering how hard it was to hear as the rain poured down on Member V's tin roof.

After I finished analyzing each interview, I retrieved the relevant quotes on the digital transcripts and copied them onto one "master" analysis table. This master table allowed me to look at all the relevant answers as they related to each interview topic. By doing this, I was able to more effectively discuss the interview questions and place quotes, while telling a linear story of the farmers' experiences. Using this "master" document, I was able to gather themes by which

to categorize the data. I looked for recurring sentiments or emotions within the conversations and allowed these larger themes to guide my organization of the discussion. The major themes that emerged are discussed in Chapter V, see also figures 3-6.

3.4 Trustworthiness and Credibility of the Study

My first time stepping foot in Guatemala was two weeks before this study was to begin and only two months before I was to delve into the thoughts and emotions of the farmers. As the main research instrument, I constantly battled elements of trustworthiness not only with my fellow researchers but also with those I planned to interview. My understanding of the community was strengthened, however, by countless hours of research into the history and progression of the San Miguel de Escobar culture and many conversations with long-time residents of the area. Even still, I embodied a world, a construct— an Anglo male inserting himself into the personal spaces of a potentially vulnerable population. To better express these concerns and how I worked to reconcile them, the following sections discuss how I strove for an approach based on trust and understanding of the context I was

Due to the elucidative nature of this study, it is not appropriate to evaluate its credibility using the positivistic truths of validity and reliability (Jamal and Hollinshead, 2001). Those who read the results of interpretive studies such as this should be able to discern that “interviews are reliably and validly constructed; context of the documents were properly analyzed; conclusions of the case study rest upon the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1981: 378) [.]” In an effort to adequately support my research and to ensure this paper’s readers perceive my study as Lincoln and Guba

(1981) suggest, they later (1985) offered criteria that more appropriately fits interpretive studies: “credibility related techniques (e.g. prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation, peer debriefing, etc.), transferability (to other settings), dependability (by examining the process of inquiry), and confirmability (by examining the output of the inquiry to see its supportability by the data) (p. 301).” Jamal and Hollinshead (2001) suggest reflexivity as an additional criterion to support qualitative inquiry. Reflexivity allows us to gauge my levels of engagement with the research setting, my interpretation of that environment, while also bringing to light any biases or concerns that may be present.

The credibility of my inquiry in Guatemala is supported by a strong effort to use a local resident to facilitate trust and relationship building in the data gathering process. By inducting Joe, my interpreter, into the research team we were able to not only probe into the farmers’ responses from different viewpoints, but we were also able to discuss together each response and its implications. This triangulation was supported also by diligent notes taking, by voice and text, and by keeping close contact with my academic advisors throughout the research process. Joe, my local interpreter and crucial member of the research team, has lived in Ciudad Vieja for over 5 years and has actively worked with the San Miguel de Escobar cooperative farmers for most of those years. His role within De la Gente is to serve as the trusted advisor to the farmers when they are leading groups of volunteers. His countless hours spent with the farmers allowed me to enter their private spaces alongside a familiar face. He knew where each farmer lived, giving me directions as if it was his beloved hometown; he greeted each farmer with emotion, a hug when appropriate; he greeted each family member and inquired about a recent life event; and asked the farmers intimate questions for which only a considerate friend would find the time. His presence

allowed for the “rich conversation-like” (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) atmosphere that gave me, an elementary researcher, the opportunity to dig deep into life within the San Miguel cooperative.

I intended to develop the story of my data collection experience. This was not only to help with my own analysis but also an effort to allow others to gain a holistic picture of how I undertook this study. Transferability is, “in summary, not the naturalists’ task to provide the index of transferability. It is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316).

3.4.1 Ethical Considerations and Reflexivity

Understanding the sensitivity of this study is imperative while navigating the cross-cultural interactions between me and our interviewees. My role as both an empathetic researcher and the cultural embodiment of colonialism complicated the research process, along with my innate bias as an American. A reflexive journal was kept to help decipher these concerns and my experiences with them. In these reflexive accounts, I hoped to illuminate my experience as a researcher, ultimately openly displaying and discussing my thoughts, opinions, and biases. Considerations were be taken towards my interpreter, their role in the study, methods used, and potential downfalls of my host community as a study site. I have used these journal entries as additional analytical support as I combed through the various interviews.

3.5 Study Timeline

The aforementioned procedures were undertaken during the summer months of 2016. Site preparation and participant observation began in early-June 2016 and I wrapped up my presence on site by late-July 2016. Analysis began in late-summer 2016, while still in Guatemala. This process continued with periods of various levels of attention through Spring of 2019 when the final paper was presented. A more detailed study timeline is included in this document as Appendix B which shows both a general timeline as well as the on-site timeline.

CHAPTER IV

UNPACKING THE EXPERIENCES

As I became more comfortable with interviewing, that comfort was absorbed by everyone in the room. This allowed conversations where I learned that these coffee farmers are proud. They are proud of the life they have created and are honored that I want to hear and understand their story. I heard of their trials, their growth, and laughed with them as they talked through the confidence they now have and the journey that got them there. Perusing through pictures allowed me, Joe, and each interviewee the chance to be a part of each other's lives. I was able to peer into their life while the photos allowed me to relate more intimately and engage more fully in the conversation.

The research questions inspired conversation on the Guatemalan culture, family relationships, and, most importantly, the role of the volunteers in the lives of the farmers – something, judging by the intermittent pauses while answering, they have likely seldom had the chance to ponder. The following discussion is my interpretation of the farmers' experiences as told by these interviews. Supported by the literature above and a comprehensive set of interview transcripts, I hope we are able to better understand the role of the farmers' intimate experiences with volunteers in shaping how they see themselves and the world around them.

4.1 Entering the Field

Prefaced by several months of study, fieldwork began upon my arrival in Guatemala at the end of May 2016. I drove with my dog from Texas, through Mexico, to the study site. Taking the drive through Mexico at a leisurely pace allowed me to not only warm up my conversational Spanish but also to see the gradual morphing of mestizo culture and people as native American qualities became more prominent as I progressed southward (Martinez-Cortez, et. al., 2012). This journey helped with my understanding and exposure to the language, and dress in which my study participants have come to be. Driving from the Mexican border to my temporary home in Antigua, I was able to piece together my initial perceptions of the country with all that I had read and heard. This was when my journaling and observations began.

I spent the first week in Guatemala settling into my rented Antiguan home, visiting the market, exploring the neighborhoods, trying to envelope myself as much as possible into the local culture. I progressed through the week partially prepared for the unique destination that Antigua is. One of the main attractions in a country with almost 2 million tourist arrivals last year (World Bank, 2017), life in Antigua is much more reminiscent of the developed world relative to Guatemala's other similarly-sized cities. After settling, I quickly began work on the project at hand.

The international nature of my study required the proposal to be approved by a local review board, which I found at Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (USAC) in Guatemala City. This approval was supplementary to my IRB approval stateside (#IRB2016-0247D). The USAC IRB requested several amendments to my study materials that threatened to push back my

study's start date. As I worked to appease the USAC IRB I found my reflexive journal to be particularly useful in documenting my thoughts, fears, and concerns for the study.

My inexperience with academically-driven interviews underpinned all other concerns throughout this period. My thoughts on whether I would be able to incite the required depth of response from the participants encouraged me to seek inspiration outside of academic discourse. In this "mid-study crisis," I came upon an interview podcast hosted by Dave Isay, with guest Brandon Stanton, of *Humans of New York* fame. This interview was the first exposure I had to the interview process outside of academic text. My fears stemmed in part from the punctiliousness of the IRB approval and consent process that seemed to detract from the passion that inspired this project. This project was founded on passion and concern for the host population, not necessarily out of academic need. While the academic needs became evident over time, I felt a need to prepare for the interview by focusing on not just academic literature but also on the compassion and genuine interest that results in a fruitful interview (Isay, 2015). I found this imperative to understanding the thoughts and emotions of the farmers. This podcast also proved useful to help my interpreter, Joe, frame his interview mindset. In keeping with Edwards' (1998) suggestions of making the interpreter a full member of the research team, I forwarded the link to Joe as I returned to Guatemala so as to help ensure that our preparations for the interviews would be closely aligned.

In resituating myself in Guatemala, I also familiarized myself with the team at De la Gente. Meeting them, seeing their Guatemalan office, and understanding their role in the community was the second stop on my data collection journey. Emmy, whom I had met via email to help initiate my study, was waiting in her office for our meeting at 8am. Emmy, an

American, worked for DLG as their community director. In that role, she served as a liaison between the San Miguel Escobar cooperative and De la Gente. In conjunction with her vigilant note-taking throughout our meeting, Emmy insisted on the separatist role of DLG in the cooperative's daily operations, implying that the San Miguel cooperative is a self-governing body that works in partnership with her non-profit. She added that De la Gente staff doesn't usually attend the monthly cooperative meeting, which was set to be my first interaction with the study participants the following day. Emmy and I were welcomed to this meeting by the organization's president to present and begin the photo elicitation process.

Fate worked alongside me in Guatemala as I received final approval from the local IRB mere days before the study introduction was to take place. With approval behind me and freshly printed consent forms in hand, I met Emmy at the DLG office for our ten-minute walk to the site of the cooperative meeting. This walk served as an extension of our conversation the previous day as we talked about the independence of each of the farmers and how the meeting-place came to be used by the cooperative. The house at which we arrived was a rented space and served mostly as a roasting and packing facility for the cooperative. The cooperative's revenue, from donations and coffee sales, affords its members a communal space to process their crops and to discuss the months' happenings. Arriving early allowed Emmy and I the chance to review our approach with the farmers, one that kept potential vulnerabilities in mind (Wang, 1999; Epstein, Stevens, McKeever, & Baruchel, 2006; Cappello, 2005) and an opportunity to plan a camera demonstration in the case that any willing participants were not familiar with using disposal cameras.

After being welcomed in by a cooperative member, Emmy offered a tour for my first visit to a working-class, Antiguan home. Stepping through a steel-clad entrance door, I was greeted by an aging concrete patio, long and narrow, protected by corrugated tin. Doorways, lacking doors, led into two empty rooms on the left where I learned that packing preparations were made. Before resting in these rooms, the farmers' green coffee beans made their way to the roasting room, the third, last room on the left. This room was packed with roasting supplies and green coffee. Heated by the fire of the charming *tostadora*, two farmers were rushing to finish their batches before the meeting commenced. I sat in a plastic chair, among the twenty or so, close to the table where I was told the cooperative's officers would sit. As a first order of business, and to not impose on the cooperative's official business, Emmy introduced me, and I introduced the study, using my IRB-approved introduction and consent form as a prompt. As I joked that my Spanish needed much work, mostly to break the ice, we explained the use of the cameras and how they would come into play during the interviews. Judging the farmers' body language, and the occasional laugh, the study was met with much elation and a receptive audience. Out of the four questions asked following the introduction, three were for nothing more than clarification. The first question asked was inquiring for any benefit that participants might receive. We assured that each farmer would get to keep the developed version of the pictures and those participating would be guaranteed volunteers throughout the six-week long photo journaling period. Emmy offered to schedule the volunteers appropriately.

Of the 16 farmers in attendance 4 opted out of participation. The president of the cooperative declined participation in the project for reasons that he cited as not having enough time. The remaining three farmers were not full members of the cooperative and were not yet

able to accept volunteers. The twelve agreeing participants accepted their cameras with eagerness. The cameras being used were Fujifilm's 35mm Disposable Camera with Flash. I helped the newly enlisted participants open the packaging and ensured everyone knew how to operate the disposable cameras. Only one participant was not familiar with operating this type of camera. Upon noticing this, several of their colleagues laughed alongside them and rushed to help the lagging participant. Before departing, I talked through the purpose of the cameras once more and explained their role in the project. In this, I hoped to encourage the farmers to take pictures that illustrated their story (Carlsson, 2001) and aided in my understanding of how volunteer tourism plays into their lives.

4.2 Navigating the Experience

Each of the interviews took place within the personal spaces of the farmers. Kitchen tables, plastic patio tables, the handmade wooden table among MEMBER VIII's lush courtyard greenery, all provided venues for our journey through the hosts' experiences. The interviews began with me presenting the newly printed pictures to the participant. More often than not, the farmer opened the envelope with a smile on their face while I sat eagerly waiting to see what is inspiring the smiles. Sometimes, the kids joined in to help, and once a house cat jumped on our table to see what the fuss was all about.

Throughout the course of the twelve interviews, I drank 16 cups of coffee. It's the Guatemalan way, at least that's what they told me. Trying to uncover, and understand, the experiences of the farmers required an empathetic interview. It was important to care, as many of

the minutes spent in conversation were not directly attributable to my research questions. The warm cups of coffee often broke the ice, but the pictures carried the conversation. It helped that Joe knew each of the farmers. To start off, family was a common topic of discussion. Joe made mention of a recent family event, which he knew of through their regular correspondence. This led to discussion of the struggles of having a sick child while also trying to manage a farm, for example. The volunteers that had just visited were able to help with tasks that would have otherwise gone unattended. This is where I, the inquisitive researcher, would step in to engage further about the experience. This methodical unpacking of the experience allowed the host to consider the experience in a new light. I asked questions that they sometimes struggled to answer, questions about the way something made them feel or perhaps the ways in which they interacted with the world around them. They took pictures of certain things and had never paused to wonder why, why that thing, why that moment.

4.2.1 Insecurity and Conflict with the Self

Spending time with each of the farmers illuminated their experiences with not just volunteers, but all foreigners. From early in the interviews, there was a clear divide between how the farmers saw themselves compared to their visitors in the context of society. MEMBER III talked about his experiences working in the capital, Guatemala City, “I mean, I was not shy with people in the community, it was with people outside of – that is, in the capital.” He refers to residents of the capital as “high society” as he continues:

At the beginning, when I went to work in the capital, for me it was really a total change. There I was very shy because these people, the high society, yes sometimes...I never had

communication with those people. So, it took me a lot to have courage and vocation to talk with them, it was quite difficult. Because I never, never...[...] I grew up here, I never left, I never had the opportunity to work in a company with a lot of colleagues from different areas, only with the same community here, with the neighbors. So, it was difficult for me to meet people that I had never shared with or knew. So, talking to them was difficult, I did not have confidence.

This story was offered up after being asked about their first experiences with volunteer tourists. As in this case, the first time the farmers interacted with the volunteers seemed to be a more difficult experience to navigate. The constant negotiation of whether their performance would be up to par, a par inflicted on themselves, dictated their perception of their own performance. "You get nervous," explained MEMBER IX.

You think, "it's better if they do not come, better if they do not come," because you did not know if they were angry people. I thought, "They're going to tell me that I do not know," or "they're going to tell me that I cannot do it." Then I was, as I said, feeling a little fear to welcome them.

MEMBER X shared a similar sentiment when he first started accepting volunteers. Their memory, though, is one of being "oppressed," a word in this case used to describe feelings of anxiety or discomfort and restriction:

Yes, I remember. The truth is that when I started working with the volunteers, I remember that on that day they said, "Well, you are going to work with volunteers." You ask yourself first, what is it like? What do I have to do? It is very difficult for one because like you do not have the experience to be able to...you are going to start working then you feel a little bit like oppressed, like, "If I say this, what can you tell me?" or something.

I remember that time we went to plant coffee plants, right? With [a friend] to remove all the mountains to be able to throw one. I remember that at that time I did not do almost anything because I was laughing and ... sometimes I do not find one or what to say because when one says, "If I say to him ... he suddenly cannot like it" but no, it is because of your lack of knowledge of working with a person. But right now, at least that time, I said ... yes, it feels a bit like oppressed. That you cannot say how I do it today, "Guys, welcome, today we are going to do this" we are talking and everything. I was very quiet because I did not have words to be talking to them because I felt bad because I said,

"Well maybe they do not like it." That is, you think things that maybe are not like that because of your lack of knowledge of working with a foreign person.

These feelings of oppression seemed to stem from the imagined opinions that MEMBER X perceived to be inflicted on them. These imagined impressions consistently delegated the experience of the farmers throughout the volunteer's presence. The assumed judgments touted by MEMBER X were so profound that they were earnestly considered when planning the next improvement project in the farmer's personal spaces. MEMBER V explains:

Even though the volunteers bring many projects - The one who decides what project is needed is the farmer. For example, there are farmers who want the chance to expand or improve their house, they want patios to tend coffee, others want tanks or fermentation piles, others want laminate to make their kitchen better, and their rooms. But we want to offer a lot of people homestay lodging, we have to give [the volunteers] a better presentation. It is not because we want to have everything nice, but we do it so that people come back and look for us.

These spaces are seen as a reflection of the self; where a newly renovated kitchen is a sign of prosperity or the addition of a patio reveals your coffee production to be healthy. For MEMBER V, giving the volunteers a more elegant place to lounge after a hard day's work will improve the way the volunteers perceive them. Much like a commercial hospitality operation, the farmers understand the importance of making a good impression on their visiting volunteers. These types of comments, however, imply a detraction from an identification solely as a farmer. The following sections explores how the role as a farmer changes throughout the volunteer tourism experience.

4.2.2 Role Playing in Volunteer Tourism

Service Provider

The condition of one's home is something that the farmers would likely not have to consider without the presence of foreign volunteers. Perhaps they would clean up for a visiting community member, but even the best neighbor will not renovate the kitchen for the next pot luck dinner. The space is evaluated, though, not just as a reflection of their self but also as a negotiation of their role as a "service provider." "Because for us," MEMBER II explains, "we have the gift of service." He continues:

For example, before working in the cooperative, when I was growing my coffee and my children were small, I was normal...I worked 15 years as a waiter, [Serving] cocktails in the capital. Then, when they told me that I could accept tourists, for me, it was not hard to host tourists or accept volunteers, for me it was not so difficult to serve them because I was used to giving service.

Given the intimate spaces in which these volunteers and the farmers interact, that service extends beyond an experience as a restaurant server providing for a member of "high society." The intimate situations allow for the service to come in the form of personal attention by MEMBER II for the well-being of the volunteers in which they assume a caretaking role.

Caretaker

The volunteers often had to carry tools and supplies on their long treks to the rural, high-altitude *cuebras*, or plots of land. These journeys took place on foot, oftentimes in less-than-favorable conditions. With Ciudad Vieja's many dirt roads, steep inclines, and frequent rainstorms, volunteers were in for surprises throughout their experience in the field. The farmers, though, found themselves in for surprises as well. MEMBER VIII recounts the time when they

felt an obligation to care for a pregnant volunteer. “She did not want to go up five minutes to get there,” he continues,

She said he could not stand it anymore and we had to slow down. She had to climb up. But what it cost her was the slowing a bit, because she had to use a stick to keep going.

He connects this experience with a memory of his wife being pregnant, explaining that he had once cared for his wife while she was pregnant; to them, a pregnant volunteer was nothing of a challenge:

Member VIII: Yes. She changed too much because I had never had such a complicated experience. Because I wanted to give a lot of care, to take the pregnant person and bring her back. I went very slowly.

Me: You got nervous then?

Member VIII: No. Because I'm used to this. We have lived with all these experiences with my wife, so I know that I have to go very slowly and be aware of something that may happen.

This role as a caretaker persists as the farmers feel an obligation to assist when needed. The intimate experiences of these volunteer tours enhance the sense of obligation for the farmers. That obligation, not necessarily an inconvenience, derives too from the farmer's experience with the tasks at hand. When they are the only knowledgeable person within reach, the friendly expert, the farmers navigate their role as a teacher to the volunteers.

Teacher

As a part of the experience with the San Miguel Cooperative, the volunteers involve themselves in every aspect of the farmers' lives. Some volunteers arrive as a part of service-learning groups, working on a preassigned project for a predetermined amount of time. Most groups are smaller and more flexible which allows for closer connections to the farmers and

those things or people they interact with most. With their vast knowledge of the coffee-growing process, harvesting, and production of the final product, the cooperative members are experts. This, coupled with the intimate environment, allows the farmers the chance to share their knowledge and treat the volunteers as students of coffee. After clarifying that he enjoys teaching the volunteers, MEMBER XI explains:

Of course, we do like it because, as [the volunteers] say, "We've never used a hoe." So, there they-- For them it is also an extraordinary thing and they like it. I like to teach them[...]. Then, one teaches these young people or those who come to pick up a tool, the hoe, so they can feel what it takes to do coffee work. Then they realize, because a volunteer who went to work, his hand was all blistered, with blood on her hands, she is going to take pictures. And the next day she came here to thank us that we took her to work. She was happy, "Even if," she says, "I'm hurt here, I'm happy because I've never used a hoe." They live in a city but here in a town, and more ... We went to work in this area too, there [pointing at the picture], with a volunteer. She stayed happy; Happy, happy, happy.

Once the volunteers have been exposed to the craft that is coffee farming, they are exposed to the rest of the process. As the farmers talked the volunteers through the many steps involved in a quality cup of coffee, they worked, alongside the farmer, in their assigned area. Each cooperative member goes about using the volunteers in their own ways. Some spend more time in the field, others have production to be done, others yet, have home projects to finish. Regardless of the venue, at the heart of every successful operation is an enthusiastic manager.

Manager / Leader

MEMBER X fills this role with his volunteers. "With the volunteers," he explains, "you have another mentality. You say, 'no, today we are going to work, do such work.' That is what you have to explain to them." He then elaborated on his new managerial role:

The truth is that I like both, as I told you. I like to work with them because apart from working, you learn from them. At least I'm going to tell you something with the coffee, here are pictures, when I have people, volunteers, I take them to the toaster, right? I like it when they go to work and that is the most important point for me because I say, well, "You are going to seal bags, you weigh coffee and you put stickers." For me that's what I like about volunteers.

Filling the role of a manager offers a different experience for these small-holder coffee farmers, all of which are self-employed with some employing the occasional seasonal worker. As with many workplaces, the biggest struggle can often be motivating your workforce. Volunteers can bring their own set of struggles. Volunteers are giving their own time, and often their own money, to participate in the farmers' lives. Let us not forget that they are also tourists, on vacation. Since there is no paycheck at the end of this project, motivation can come from either their intrinsic volunteer motivations we have seen in previous research or the host can play a role in giving the volunteer a rewarding, productive experience. MEMBER V chimed in with his strategy with the volunteers, "Well, some depend on the farmer with how they motivate [the volunteers], for example, as I have told Chadley, I like to do competitions." Laughing, he explains himself:

"Well, let's start boys to cut coffee," type eight and a half because at eight o'clock we receive them, eight and a half depending on the distance or, from eight and a half to nine o'clock we are going to start the work and I tell them, "Whoever cuts the best coffee" – [...] "Whoever cuts good coffee and does more than all of [the other volunteers], has their prize." And they say, "What is our prize?" Take a good cup of coffee.

This motivational, managerial role encourages a healthy environment that minimizes power struggles and promotes a team-like atmosphere. The leadership role that this farmer adopts allows for a setting in which memories beyond a work project are achieved.

Friend

This approach facilitates an environment that encourages teamwork, laughter, and allows the farmer to move beyond simply being a caretaker, teacher, or manager. Here, the farmer can also be a friend. MEMBER XI discusses this:

Well, the difference is that we, as I was saying, are not tourist guides, we are friends with the tourists and a friend is spoken to with confidence. On the other hand, a tourist guide only explains what he knows, not what he does. So, we know how to process our coffee because sometimes a tourist guide, let's say they go elsewhere, they are not workers, they are not farmers, they are nothing, so they have only studied for this. We have not studied, we have lived in this, we have been born in this, working in coffee and more for 11 years ago that we already learned to process coffee.

With this comment, MEMBER XI negotiates their role in the tourism ecosystem but chooses to not identify as a guide to the volunteer. They express that a tourist's guide could never achieve this level of intimacy with a volunteer, simply because they would be too focused on sharing their learned knowledge. For MEMBER XI, it is a life they are sharing. It is through the intimacy involved in this shared experience that the hosts were able to look beyond their given role and identify with a more personal role. Friendship, in this case, implies a sense of closeness and trust. MEMBER XI is able to explain their personal connections to the volunteer by establishing their self as a farmer with authority, one that not only knows how to farm coffee but has coffee farming as an integral part of their being, or rather, their self.

4.2.3 A Renewed Cultural Identity

The feeling of friendship is enlightened by a sense of sameness with people that were initially seen as so different and intimidating. In the intimate conversations, the farmers were able to learn that though their appearance may differ, while their tongues don't communicate,

they and their visiting volunteers may share social or cultural similarities. MEMBER VIII enjoys learning these similarities, as he explains:

Well, [hosting volunteers] has given me many experiences from other countries. Because they tell me how they live in their countries. Sometimes something good and sometimes something worse. For example, one [volunteer] came from Turkey and told me that he lives far away but that sometimes there is conflict too and here in [Guatemala] it is the same.

After growing distraught by potential differences and conflict, MEMBER VIII enjoys knowing that there is a bit of parity to the world's societies. This helps to enhance some sort of collective identity, one that not only enlightened the farmer's self-awareness, but allowed for a deeper connection with the volunteer. From this conversation, MEMBER VIII was able to better understand their struggles in Guatemala by hearing similar stories from other corners of the world.

These conversations can also produce a greater sense of identity with the hosts' own culture. Welcoming the volunteers into their personal spaces, the farmers were able to flaunt an aspect of their culture, food, which isn't often recognized within the family without the occurrence of a special event. MEMBER VI explains:

Yes, we like [hosting the volunteers] because how-- it's what I told you, to share cultures. For example, they say, well, they ask me "And that food, what is it?" Because it is not like serving a [regular] lunch, something special is prepared. On the other hand, for what is the course of the week, we eat whatever is available. So, they are sometimes surprised by some food that they have never known, then they like it and we like it so that they will learn from what we do during the course of the week.

Being able to share these experiences offered the farmers a different outlook on their own lives. Prior to engaging with the Cooperative's volunteer program, it was difficult for its members to understand why people would choose to pay their own money to work on someone

else's farm; not to mention, while on vacation. However, the demand for experiences offered through the volunteer tourism program prove to the farmers that they do have a life full of experiences waiting to be shared. "We like to share that experience, right?" MEMBER XII explains:

Because many tourists, when they come, they explain to us that in their country they do not look at all that, that life in their country is very different to the lives of here. Then, when they come, they go very happy, carrying their hoe so they can go to work. So, one feels happy to be able to teach them so that they can truly see what the customs are like here in Guatemala.

We have known these cross-cultural interactions to have value to volunteer tourists, but that same value, enjoyed by the volunteers, is also cherished by the host. The opportunity to share their culture and the chance to learn of others is a delight that was resonated throughout most of the interviews. The intimacy involved in the experiences, in which the volunteers share coffee with the farmers, sleep under the same roof, or eat from the same table, lends to a sense of cultural inclusion and identification with a collective self.

4.3 The Self and Beyond

4.3.1 Presenting a New Self

One of the most pressing goals of this project was to gain an understanding of how the experiences of the host persists in their daily lives after the volunteers depart and how it changes the way they see themselves in the context of their social world. With a constant comparison of their selves with foreign volunteers and a perpetual negotiation of their role in the experience, how they *feel* about themselves and their work helps in this analysis. Though the farmers do feel

a friendship for the volunteers, the varying adopted roles show that their selves are still to be negotiated within the experience. Allowing the volunteer to share the intimate spaces with the farmer gives them a chance to share the experience, whether good or bad. When asked about how volunteers made him feel, generally, MEMBER V expressed:

I feel satisfied when they tell me, "Good job, what we did or what you did," But if they tell me, "your work is very bad," then I really have to see how I can improve.

Though MEMBER V is an experienced, well-respected coffee farmer, the vocal opinions of the volunteers can affect the way he feels about his performance. Their feelings of satisfaction, of positive self-regard, are negotiated constantly as each volunteer experience concludes. When positive, the opinions of the volunteers can have a powerful impact on the self-esteem of the hosts. MEMBER VII calls this experience "beautiful" and explains how the volunteers' good experiences enhance his feelings of a job well done:

Member VII: We have had beautiful experiences; for example, an experience with a Colombian woman who had not tried [our] coffee and had ... and there, Colombia, is a place where it is also a coffee country, but she had never tried coffee here. She tried the coffee here and said it was one of the best coffees she had tasted. And she said incredible, but she drank up to four cups of coffee. [laughs]

Me: And when they leave happy like that, how do you feel?

Member VII: Well, in us we are satisfied that we are doing a good job, and that they know that they are drinking one of the best coffees in the world.

This process, though, does not come without its struggles. Before the farmers are allowed to host volunteers, they must be approved as a full member of the Cooperative. This decision is not based on some standardized metric or achievement but rather is made simply at the discretion of the Cooperative's officers. While some farmers seemed to have harsh feelings towards this process, most understood their lack of experience when getting their start in the coffee-producing

community. They respected the unspoken rules that must be followed as they established themselves as a cooperative farmer. MEMBER I, a relatively new farmer, still struggles sometimes with appropriate answers to questions posed by volunteers.

Sometimes I have to think, well, that I'm going to respond [laughs]. Yes, because sometimes I still need to learn some things about coffee. I do not have what you call 100% experience, you always have to learn more.

As volunteers continued to visit, the experiences with volunteers exposed the farmers to a variety of people and cultures. This immersion, coupled with their newfound ability to adapt to unique situations, allowed them to break through the initial anxiety. MEMBER XI explains his experiences with gaining more self-confidence:

Member XI: It was bad. [Laughs] We did not know anything. Nothing, nothing, we were nervous. Sometimes, I thought [...], the volunteer who was in the Office told us, "Look, tomorrow we have ... Tomorrow you have [a volunteer]". I wish they did not come because you did not know anything. [laughs] True? One did not have any experience of anything.

Joe: Really?

Member XI: Or if not, I thought, "It will be good if they did not come", because I did not know much, I had no experience.

Me: Did you get nervous?

Member XI: Yes. Before, he would get nervous. As one had never given a coffee tour, had not lived with people from other countries, then we did get nervous, but today no longer. Today better if you give us tours twice a day. [laughs]

Me: Are you more comfortable?

Member XI: Yes, now because I have learned.

Allowing the cooperative members to first adjust to the production of coffee allows them to become experts in their line of work before ever having to navigate accepting volunteers. This keeps their professional focus on coffee, building their knowledge base of the field, and allowing

their self-esteem to be less negatively affected by difficult questions or situations involving foreign volunteers. By making coffee the focus of their preparations, the cooperative also decreases the farmers' economic dependence on volunteer tourism; ensuring that they are farmers first, and volunteer tourist hosts second.

Just as when someone learns a new trade or skill, the real test comes when they have to perform as the expert, in this case, in the presence of volunteers. MEMBER VIII explains that even when he was confident in his coffee-producing aptitude, adding the foreign audience takes some adjusting:

Member VIII: Well, it feels weird because you're not used to being with foreigners. Because I relate more to Guatemalans. So, since I had never had that opportunity, I felt afraid to speak or it was hard to explain everything. But I had to learn with the other gentlemen for three years. I went with them, I only helped there with them. And then when they saw that I could do it, then they let me work alone.

Joe: But not anymore? Are there no nerves? Have you already gained experience?

Member VIII: No, now normal. Today I feel good [working with the volunteers]. When they speak Spanish, now, it is easier for me. The complicated thing, for me, is to at least know some words in the English language. It would be much better. Still...I have more confidence to talk now. With a group of people, who are together, I can speak to them easier. Because before I did not have the power of communication, words for the group. Today it is easier.

Despite the language barriers he has with the volunteers, the experience is apparently impactful. Working through a sort of apprenticeship program before taking on volunteers of their own allowed them to ensure their knowledge of the trade was adequate to show, teach, and manage the volunteers through the process. The experiences of working with volunteers over time has given MEMBER VIII the “power of communication,” the ability to express their

desires, opinions, and ideas to a group – something that, having never left Guatemala, they were not able to do.

Through satisfaction in their job performance evaluation, confirmation that they know their trade well, and a newfound ability to speak with confidence to those outside of their social and cultural circles, the intimate volunteer tourism experiences have helped farmers gain a new perspective of the life they lead.

4.3.2 Understanding the Self

The intimate volunteer tourism experience is ripe with emotional connections and re-evaluations of a host's attitude regarding their life's path. That evaluation can, however, persist in the absence of emotion. Sharing this experience with foreign visitors seemed to accentuate the farmers' understanding of their own lives. MEMBER X mentioned how he enjoyed helping people feel happy with this new learning experience:

At least I see it is good because you can share with them part of their work, their ideas that you have, you share a job, how to do a job to them, they help you and they are happy because they say that in their country, some of them, they do not do that. So, when they come here they feel very happy. For me, it really is a good experience to work with people.

Another thing is that the more people you have a lot that is better for you because you have a lot of work, you are going to walk more at work. For example, as in coffee, when one is cutting red beans, many hands are needed. When you have about eight people then you cut up to 300 pounds.

Sharing the intimate aspects of their life helped them understand that what is familiar to him, may be very different to the volunteers. The volunteers, who often come from very different means, seem to take every opportunity to share their perceptions of the farmers' jobs. When

asked about this, MEMBER VIII began describing an experience in which the natural environment of their workplace was something that could please foreigners. This, in turn, made him feel good. He explains:

Member VIII: A woman who worked in the United States told me that she felt good when she went to the field, to see coffee plants, to see trees, to do something with a hoe, because all her life she has been sitting in front of a computer and in place where it does not give much to the sun, and just sitting. And it is a good experience where there is pure air, where there is sun. And she was very happy, because she knows she will do it again, she would like to do it very often

Me: How do you feel when you receive comments like that?

Member VIII: I feel good because I know that I'm taking people to feel good, to look at something of interest. So, one feels good then to serve people like that.

Joe: How does it feel exactly when they say that? [...]

Member VIII: I feel - happy. And a young woman also came from the UN. She says that she worked in UN human resources. Then also the same story: that she was tired of ... In that month she went on vacation and came to Guatemala to do something different, to see the coffee process, to go up to the field, and the same thing: that she is in an office where he does not look at air, he does not look at trees, he does not look at plants, he does not ... from his work to his house. And coming to Guatemala and seeing all this, he was very happy to be here.

His feelings of content express a sense of positive self-concept, that his job and role as a service provider to that volunteer is a worthwhile and meaningful. The volunteers are, however, actually working in this pristine environment, not simply basking in its wondrousness. Helping to coach and encourage the volunteers as they work seems to help the farmers better understand the valuable knowledge they have developed. MEMBER V gains a higher sense of self-worth for the work he does, simply by helping the volunteer understand the amount of effort that goes into a cup of coffee.

Member V: Yes, I also like to do this work so that people can have the knowledge of what work is. It is very hard to carry a basket tied to the waist and fill it and be under the sun or in the rain. In this case, see how much work it takes to have a cup of coffee.

Joe: But you do that [...] with the volunteers too?

Member V: -with them. Yes, because when they are large groups, they are also motivated to see the work and want to help you, to buy your coffee, or to say in your country, to tell your friends, "I want if you go to Guatemala, go where the people because they directly help the farmer."

His desire to showcase how hard he works pays off with comments from volunteers that imply their intrigue with the job he has. He continued:

For example, "It's hard work you do" Because some said, "Member V, I also know about coffee", "Ah, good, we're going to work very well," then I'll go - [laughs] But when they look at the whole process from the seed to the [final step], they say, "Really, Member V, now I know that I do not know anything about coffee. I did not know anything about coffee, but with what you have taught me, I know how much it can be worth."

Helping the volunteers understand the value of his labor helps to not only build up his own self-worth but also allows MEMBER V to build a better connection with the volunteers. This discussion of hard work is coupled, coupled, by thoughts of sharing not only the work but also products of that work. The intimate experiences involved with the host and the volunteer having these exchanges, also affords the pair to enjoy the fruit of that labor. Sharing the cup of coffee with a friend that has a newfound appreciation for the liquid in their cup, also aids the farmer in maintaining a positive self-concept.

The intimate volunteer interactions also allow the host to curate an experience that is valued beyond the volunteers' in-country travels. Sharing a cup, and a bag, of coffee with the volunteers allows a farmer the chance to see that their product makes it back home with the traveler. MEMBER V, while boasting of his "good coffee," talks about how having dinner with

the volunteers and being able to share a cup of coffee with them, inspired them to take a piece of his labor to enjoy and remember him by:

They are also lucky because I can also prepare good coffee and the family produces very good coffee. Thanks to these people also, we were able to enjoy this dinner, apart from the fact that they still enjoyed a good coffee, they will be enjoying in the United States, since they bought me some bags of coffee here.

Sharing his products in this manner results in better awareness in his coffee. It is this recognition, global recognition, which MEMBER VI attributes to tourism:

Member VI: In tourism, we are recognized now, I think, internationally...we have shared with people of different nationalities. So, what is difficult for us is to remind ourselves of each person's name because how many people come with us and pronounce it is the most difficult thing. So it's very beneficial because now we know each other, how many photos will be in different parts of the world?

Me: Thousands and thousands.

Member VI: Yes, and we've even recorded two movies this year.

By simply sharing a cup of coffee, not only will their work be recognized around the world, the volunteers with which they connect will also be able to enjoy the fruits of their shared labor.

4.3.3 The Self and Others

Each of my questions throughout each interview were focused on the individual farmer, with the occasional inquiry into their involvement with the community or cooperative. Sometimes, however, an answer came that used “we” as the subject to questions that focused on “I” or “you.” After the intimate volunteer experiences, there is an inherent sense of identity with things outside of the farmer-self. The value of others is particularly noteworthy. Having the help

of the volunteers has allowed MEMBER X to better appreciate the value of the work and the help he receives from others. Through this experience, he is more consciously aware that he is not going at this farming endeavor alone.

Yes, because you notice that at least one begins to value your life. I'll give you a great example, I'll tell you how it is how you share one with a person. I worked a lot with Monique, right? She left. I worked with her a long time and I learned a lot from her, and I say I have to value my life and my family because I have had the opportunity, the benefits that I have, to share it with my family in something that is served here at home. I have learned to value. All this is the result of my family, the study of my children, investing for plants, investing to travel. And also know how to value my family because, I say, today are my children. Possibly in the future, they will get married and they leave. At least I had the opportunity to share with my family.

As I did with this [Monique], we work a lot with coffee, and then, one says a little: "I have to know how to value the person." It's done when you work with something. You sometimes do a job that sometimes you do not - how to explain it? [pauses] I do something, right? But I do not value anything about that person. Then you learn that things always have to be done better day by day. That's where one says: "No, I have to know how to value the person and also my work", in the case of the family, right? Share all jobs that are jobs with people, as well as volunteers, tourism. A lunch, at least, when it is prepared, do it with the best.

Not only do they have the opportunity to reflect on the value of others, but through the experiences with the volunteers there is a common identification with a better socioeconomic status than before. MEMBER IX mentions her comfort in expecting a more stable future for her family after using the cooperative and volunteers to get the “tools” her family needs to have a sustainable livelihood.

When we entered the cooperative, truthfully, it was something very good for us, for our family since we have surpassed much in what has been paid for the feeding, the clothes, the education. For example, before the children went sixth to primary, not now. We want to support them as far as they want, for the education is really a tool to be able to survive in the future.

MEMBER V seems to also identify now with a higher socioeconomic status and adds that accepting volunteers was an opportunity that they did not expect to have, but that now it will help with ensuring the health and well-being of his family.

Since we did not think about that work [with the volunteers], but that helps us to continue helping our family, especially our children, in their education, their clothing, and in health. Since the children are, those who sometimes get sicker and have to be economically available to help them heal them.

The farmers' identification with the working class, not having the ability to afford luxuries, such as travel, have been accentuated in the volunteer experience. Despite the potential economic benefit, MEMBER V explains his frustrations with not being able to travel:

Well, I see that I have more opportunity to sell more coffee [...]. Because some people tell me that they invite me to travel and that they can give me lodging in their house. But, unfortunately, we still do not have many resources to be able to travel since many requirements are requested here by the embassy, so we cannot travel.

But the intimate volunteer/host interactions gives the farmer the opportunity to experience other cultures. As MEMBER IV puts it, the chance to get to know people from places that they would have "never imagined."

Apart from the benefit we have of income, we have the benefit of meeting many people. To relate to people who before, we never imagined we would. For example, and even when we were going to think that we were going to have communication with someone from another country? In exchange now, we know people from other places and they know us through the coffee. (MEMBER VI)

By connecting with these volunteers, foreigners that would not innately identify with Guatemalan coffee farmers, in intimate spaces despite cultural and language barriers, you offer the host a chance to change the way they are portrayed to the volunteer. MEMBER V offers his view on his intimate interactions with the newcomers:

But they were-- from the first time we started talking, they had a lot of love because we treated them like everyone else, right? Not only because they come for the first time, but we, our family, I do not know if Chadley has noticed, but we characterize by attending to everyone well regardless of where they come from, if they speak a little Spanish or only English.

I did notice; the hospitality of these farmers was hard to ignore. The experiences that MEMBER V had with volunteers was common among San Miguel members. These experiences have allowed for robust connections that left a mark on all involved. The following chapter helps us better understand these connections and what they mean.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND FURTHER DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Sifting through the interview excerpts highlighted in Chapter IV, we are better equipped to answer the research questions and understand the ways in which hosts' identity processes intersect with the volunteer tourism experience. With Chapter IV and V together, we gain a more holistic, yet still relatively shallow, understanding of how the host identity moves through the volunteer tourism experience and how these identities are left with the host after the tourists return home. Referring to Appendix C along with these chapters, we are reminded of how the research questions are segmented and can better understand how these discussions inform my inquiry. Refer to Chapter III to revisit the methods through which this discussion was authored.

The volunteer tourism experience led the farmer hosts in Ciudad Vieja on a journey with their visitors that consisted of the internalization of perceived opinions and a subsequent reconceptualization of the self. The hosts' journey through the theoretical looking glass first forced them into a predefined role, one they felt was oppressive. However, through their adoption of various roles and opportunities for connections with the tourists, among other things, their own perceptions of their self were able to be reimagined. We learned that with the help of these identity reforming experiences, the host was able to carry on with not only a new relationship with their self, but also a new perspective on their place in a global society.

In this chapter, I will attempt to elaborate more deeply on the themes highlighted in Chapter IV, connecting them more clearly with the previously reviewed literature. In succeeding sections, I will suggest ways in which the experiences of these hosts can help us proceed more

considerately with both volunteer tourism program development and host-centered research. Later, in Chapter VI, I will discuss the implications of this study and suggest ways in which we can move forward towards a more considerate and robust tourism domain.

5.2 Understanding the Host Experience

The farmers' experiences with volunteers hosted a variety of feelings that were discussed at length in Chapter IV. These feelings have been optimally categorized as oppression, nervousness, and cultural division. We can refer to Figure 3 for a more detailed look at how these themes were mitigated. Oppression in the course of the immediate volunteer experience is navigated in part by the adoption of various roles, offering the host a chance to assert power in an environment they wouldn't be able to otherwise; nervousness is made into a self-enriching trait by allowing the host to share imitate aspects of their daily life with the tourist; and feelings of cultural division are made less significant by allowing the host to share culturally important experiences and by allowing them to learn about others', which ultimately led to mention of a new collective identity. The realities that governed these feelings, though, were all imagined. Scholarship in symbolic interactionism, that which stemmed from Cooley's (1902) *Looking Glass Self*, tells us that we imagine what others think of us and construct our own self-view around that image. These ideas hold true in Ciudad Vieja. We learned that through the volunteer tourism experience, the host can alter that view of their self. In the intimate volunteer tourism environment, the host is able to change the way they see their self by changing the way they think the tourist sees them.

While the hosts' feelings of oppression permeated their experiences, various assumed roles, such as caregiver and manager, help guide the experience for both them and the volunteer. The intimate connections, though, involving cultural expression, sharing of past life experiences, confirmation of a job well done, and the cross-cultural opportunities all leave a lasting, positive impact on the host self. From a newfound ability to speak publicly with confidence, to a heightened sense of esteem, and a new global perspective, the Other emerges from the volunteer tourism experience with a new, more positive perspective of the self.

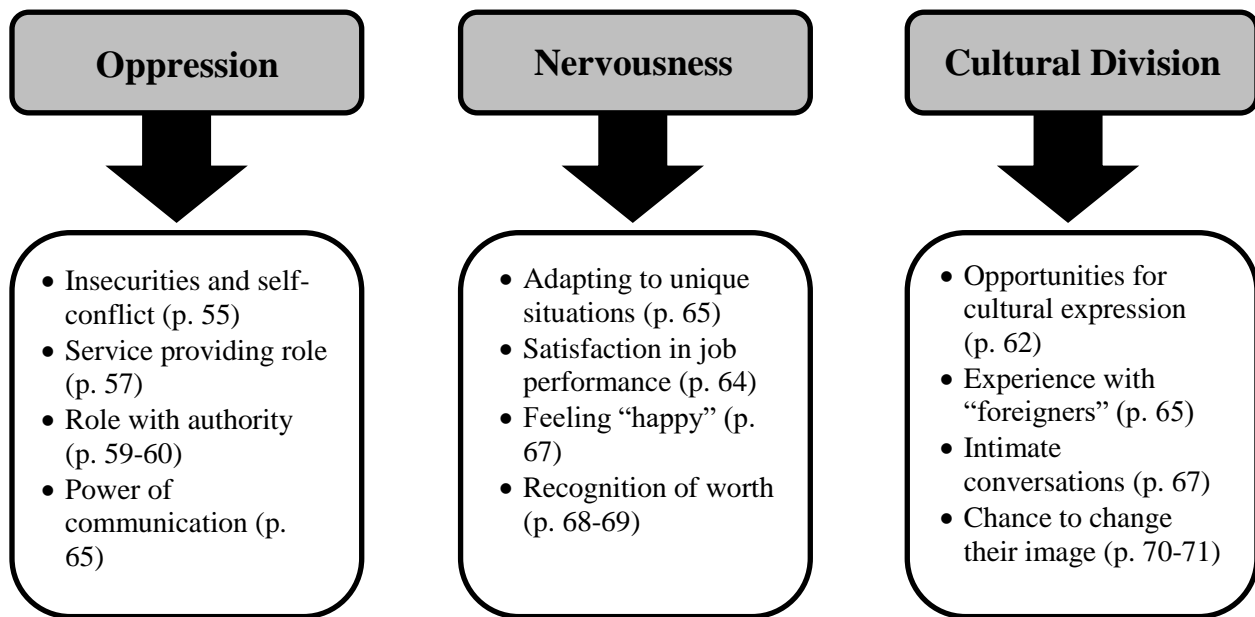


Figure 3: Understanding the Host Experience

5.2.1 Navigating from an Oppressed to a Confident Self

Self-concept, as Gatson (2011, pp. 225) suggests, is a “reflection of one’s empirical place in society.” These identities are ever-changing as they adapt to the erratic landscapes of social interaction. In the face of novel experiences, new selves emerge, in the same way as old and new identities are combined (Gatson, 2011). The hierarchy of these identities, how, and if, they are displayed publicly is subject to the nature of not only the self but also of the situation (Stryker, 1980). “That is,” Burke (2004) claims, “the actor has an identity standard for each situation he enters.” These identities, however, are consistently up for negotiation in the presence of new people, places, or experiences (Tice, 1992). Our attempt at uncovering the identity processes in a face-to-face volunteer tourism setting brought to light this inconsistent nature of self-identity.

Navigating the memories of the farmers’ first experiences with volunteers took an empathetic ear. Insecurities were rampant, feelings of anxiety, and being fearful that, as MEMBER IX put it, “[the volunteers] will tell me that I do not know.” Upon accepting volunteer tourists, the cooperative members were fraught with feelings of exclusion and of insignificance. MEMBER X best expresses these feelings of insignificance with their use of the word “oppressed.” At first, my interpreter and I dismissed this as being a sensationalist comment, perhaps influenced by the research setting. Its use plagued my thoughts. After further analysis, though, it became clear that their use of “oppressed” was an apt choice. The word was used to describe a feeling of powerlessness, to express that its user was no longer in control of a situation in an environment that was previously uncontested. Hollinshead describes this feeling as a ‘sort of tourized confinement in the suffocating straight-jacket of enslaving external conceptions’ (1992, p. 44). This experience and these feelings of oppression are housed in an environment in

which the host questioned their knowledge as a farmer, fixated on their inexperience with foreigners, and didn't feel the situation was at all within their control. This is the power of the imagined influence of the gazing volunteer in a postcolonial environment.

To better understand this, it is helpful to look at these thoughts through the eyes of historically oppressed populations. In *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins discusses the oppressed state and its relationship with identity. Oppression, in this case, is defined by an objectification of the host; that they have a role to play and that they must play this role to the imagined standard of the volunteer. The oppressed are often, as in this case, forced to consider living two realities, one for them and one for others (Gwaltney, 1980). Members of an oppressed group often hold identities within that group but do not associate their many selves solely with those in-group identities (Hill Collins, 2000). In her example Hill Collins explained that black domestic workers do not define themselves as “mammies, matriarchs, welfare mothers, [...]” et al. It is in the varying life situations that identities beyond those assigned to them by their oppressors are able to be explored. This “system of oppression,” though, “draws much of its strength from the acquiescence of its victims [...]” (Murray, 1987, 106). That victimhood is often not seen as such by the oppressed. Rather than a victim mentality, from it comes a display of strength, as a means to be branded a survivor (Hill Collins, 2000). It is this lack of participation in the oppressed identity, a farmer in our case, that allows for moving beyond such a situation (Hill Collins, 2000). In essence, allowing the cooperative member to explore social roles outside of those such as Guatemalan or Farmer, those that were preassigned to them based on the imagined expectations of the volunteer, presents opportunities for feelings of oppression to be neutralized.

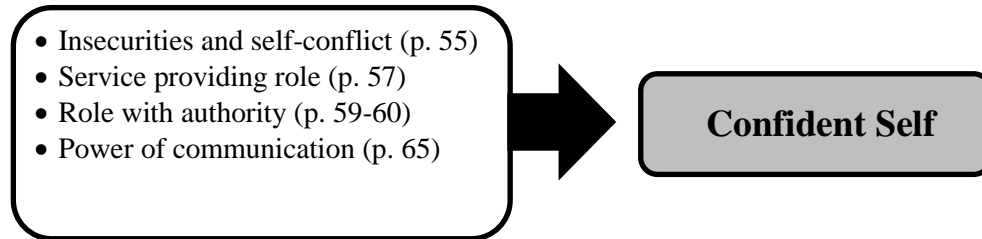


Figure 4: Navigating Oppression

The adoption of various roles, outside of those *assigned* to them, allows the host to gradually move on from feelings of insignificance. Being a service-provider still presents an unbalanced power dynamic, but as that experience grows more meaningful and intimate, the relationship with the tourist is communized. As a caretaker, the host is given the opportunity to express their expertise. As the knowledge of the farmer is more regularly displayed and they adopt roles such as teacher or leader, their power in the relationship is again strengthened. In these roles, the host is offered the chance to see themselves as something other than a farmer, other than a host. By adopting these roles, the host avoids participating in their own oppression (Hill Collins, 2000). The hosts' relationship with the tourist is made more equitable as they adapt to these new, socially-elevated roles.

By allowing the host to be in control of the experience, by giving them opportunities to express knowledge and skills beyond what they or the tourist expects, they can escape the confines of an oppressive relationship with the volunteer. By doing this we let the host control the tourists' perceptions of who they are. Learning from interactionists (Cooley, 1902; Tice, 1992), we understand that by changing the perceived notion of their selves, they are also

improving their own self-view. It is in the same, previously oppressive, situations that we heard stories of a newfound image of the hosts' self. "I have more confidence to talk now," MEMBER VIII explained after walking us through the various roles they played throughout the experience, "[...] before, I did not have the power of communication." The volunteer tourism experience, then, allowed the mitigation of oppression, placing the power of the experience in the hands of the host, changing the way the host imagines they are perceived by their visitor. Thus, the self is more confident. Managing this display of confidence, however, only covers one aspect of this self-reforming experience. The confident self is the result of an adaptation of the host to their experience with the tourists. This renewed confidence has allowed them to change the way they feel the tourist sees their external self. Having gained a better understanding of how the host can navigate the supposed oppression of the volunteer tourism experience, we can now look at the way the host feels about their self. The way a person feels about their self-concept can also be called self-esteem.

5.2.2 From Nervousness to Improved Self-Esteem

In understanding the reformation of self-views, it is logical to subsequently consider aspects of self-esteem. We must, however, look to a definition of self-esteem with multiple dimensions, one that allows us to say more than simply the host feels good about their self-concept. For this case, we use global self-esteem. Global self-esteem, used here to describe the whole self rather than specific traits of oneself, can be defined simply as an overall positive or negative view of the self (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). Yet, the concept is more robust. Tafarodi and Swann (1995) suggest that in the internalization of reactions, the Other experiences their self

as either *acceptable* or *unacceptable* and *strong* or *weak*. As a result of these volunteer tourism interactions the farmer gains a better liking for their self, or doesn't, and sees themselves as more competent, or not. Feelings of nervousness were prominent in the initial volunteer tourism experiences, as MEMBER IX explains "You get nervous, you think, 'it's better if they do not come [...].'" In this initial, unfamiliar situation, MEMBER IX, like other farmers, was *unapproving* of their self, and felt *weak*. Not feeling their knowledge was adequate or being in unfamiliar situations made a potentially vulnerable host even more so.

In this study, the tourists' reactions have shown to be an integral part of the host experience of self-exploration. It became evident that the reactions and opinions of the tourists held some amount of value to the host. When asked why coffee farming was their occupation of choice, most farmers cited the economic opportunity or a continuation of their family's farming traditions. Not one answer was founded in the opinions of others, such as making the volunteer smile or offering the tourist a delicious cup of coffee. Almost all hosts, however, gave reaction-focused answers when asked about their experiences as a farmer in the volunteer tourism environment. Rather than being an adaptation to some experience, as was confidence, the host is able to be the judge of their self, to view oneself "in the valuative reactions of others" (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). The farmers' judgement of their selves offered the chance to gain a better liking for their self.

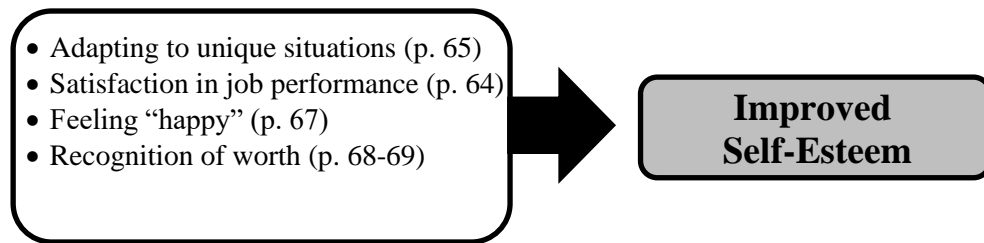


Figure 5: Navigating Nervousness

Intimate conversations with volunteer tourists, resulting in reactions from the tourists, allowed the farmer to mediate these feelings and to use the experience to grow. Hearing positive comments about their coffee, being told that they are doing a good job, and feeling happy helped to enhance the farmers' own interpretation of their self. Most of the stories told were not about the prosperity brought about through farming or tourism, but about the volunteer who was envious that the host got to experience their picturesque farm as a part of the daily routine or about the tourist that told their host that they make the best coffee they've ever tasted. The farmers' explanations of their experience were centered around the tourists' reactions.

As this positive feedback gradually led the host to like oneself more, other similar reactions began to improve their global self-esteem by way of self-competence (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). Recounting a reaction received from a foreign volunteer, we are able to see the impact on MEMBER VII's own self view, "[...] we are satisfied that we are doing a good job, and that they know that they are drinking one of the best coffees in the world." MEMBER V, too, mentioned that they "[...] feel satisfied when [the tourists] tell me, 'Good job, what we did or what you did.'"

Through the volunteer tourism interaction, the farmers' nerves were calmed not just by experience, but by the affirmation from tourists that their life was one worth being proud of, that their product was one worth buying. This affirmation would not have occurred without the intimate conversations in which the tourists' reactions occurred. The farmers' experiences with volunteers aided in an enriched sense of esteem that, among other things, allows them to feel *accepting* of themselves and to view themselves as *strong*. Even with the new, more positive view of their self, there were elements of disconnection between the host and the volunteer. These differences, which I describe as cultural division, are centered around the host imagining and fixating on these cultural differences.

5.2.3 Cultural Division to New Collective Identity

Comments on the farmers' initial experiences with volunteers, made throughout the interviews, highlighted a sense of disconnection to the tourist. These comments were made in reference to the period before volunteers were accepted by the farmer. They had no experience with foreigners and felt they might be too different for any experiences to go well. After all, the tourist gaze (Urry, 1990) *is* founded on perceived differences. These early relationships, then, were founded on cultural notions of *them* vs. *us* and the colonial histories passed down in the host community. This was also evident as several farmers likened their experiences with volunteer tourists to previous experiences in service industry positions serving *those people*, in the Capital. This further accentuates ideals that tourism development is a rich-to-poor dynamic where the postcolonial state is dependent on the demand of the rich or Western (Tucker & Akama, 2009). These differences encouraged the social stratification of the host and the

volunteer; the two parties positioned themselves as a part of two separate, but cooperating, imagined communities (Anderson, 1983). The farmers made assumptions about their visitors, the differences they have with them, and the potential of their relationship. Using Benedict Anderson's idea of imagined communities, Stronza (2008) notes that the host has an ability to use the tourist gaze to imagine their own community. In this case, prior to gaining experience with volunteers, the farmers constructed imagined boundaries around their community based on the differences they felt they had with the volunteers.

However, as the experience progressed, the host and the volunteer were offered the chance to share cultural traditions within an intimate space. Sharing special recipes, cups of coffee, and the like, offered flexibility in a relationship built within cultural and socioeconomic boundaries. The opportunity to impress the volunteers with experiences of their own culture also allowed the farmers to gain a new appreciation for customs of their own that are normally overlooked. Through the conversation over a simple meal, the farmer is able to better understand why someone would want to visit them and experience the Guatemalan culture.

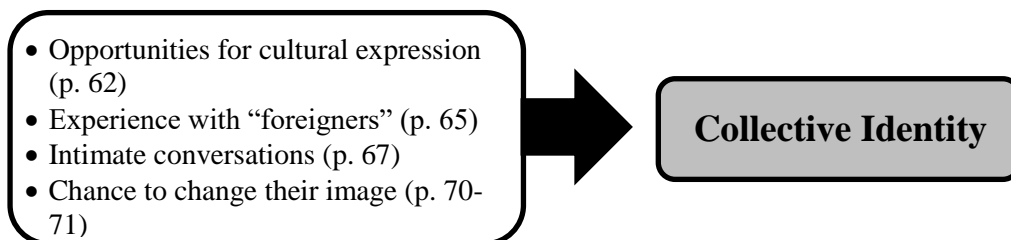


Figure 6: Navigating Cultural Division

These cross-cultural notions dominate the tourist experience in volunteer tourism, albeit in a different way (see McIntosh & Zahra, 2007), the same can be said for the experiences of the host. As MEMBER VI says, “[...] we have the benefit of meeting many people. To relate to people who, before, we never imagined we would.” The opportunity to interact with people from around the globe offered the San Miguel farmers the chance to connect with those they normally would not. They are also able to make better connections of their own culture by learning how others around the world are similar. MEMBER VIII explained this best, “Because they tell me how they live in their countries [...] but that sometimes there is conflict too and here in [Guatemala] it is the same.” Learning with what the tourists’ home countries struggle allows them to develop a new sense of sameness with the volunteer, a collective identity.

Using preconceived ideas of ethnic and cultural differences, the farmers’ imagined communities (Anderson, 1983) excluded the volunteer tourist. However, by changing the perceptions defining these separate identities, the host is able to reshape who the imagined community includes. In other words, by reframing the tourist gaze through intimate interactions, the farmers were able to imagine a new community that includes the tourist. Sharing these varying perspectives in an intimate setting allowed a new community to be perceived, one that included both the foreign volunteer and the host. This implies that Stronza’s (2008) aforementioned notion is not static, that the hosts’ response to the tourist gaze is negotiable. The volunteer tourism experience has offered the host the opportunity to form a new collective identity, one that transcends the boundaries of their existing communities.

5.3 Conclusion

The literature found in Chapter II remains helpful as we uncover the hosts' processes of identification. We must remember, however, that the identities discussed in this chapter are fluid, and may be influenced by factors outside of those discussed. After all, the postcolonial tourism environment is quite multi-faceted.

Rather than seeing postcolonial representations of identity as passively accepted by the colonized, a truly postcolonial stance views cultural identity as an “ongoing process, politically contested and historically unfinished” (Clifford, 1988, p. 9) as quoted by (Turner & Akama, 2009)

In learning about the variable identities involved in a postcolonial environment, we try to understand not how the colonizers control the identities but how the colonial relationship informs them. We learned that volunteer tourism helps to inform a part of the host identity by the social relationships involved, however tumultuous they may be, and by refocusing the gaze through which the identities are viewed (Davis, 2014). Coopersmith (1967) told us that “each person’s self-concept, to a considerable extent, is a mirror reflection of how he has been (and is) seen by others who are important to him” (p. 201). By this, we can see that the volunteer tourist is intrinsically important to the host.

As the host adapts to the perceived opinions of their visitors, they adopted roles which, through their storytelling, we learned became interconnected with their self (Deaux, 1996) and helped to reshape their perception of this self (Love & Davis, 2014). The roles adopted by the farmers allowed them to publicly be something other than a farmer and to find this new role to be a part of their identity and their stronger sense of self (Baumeister & Tice, 1984).

Borrowing further from the reviewed literature, we learned that by taking on the perspective of the visiting volunteer, through their experiences in intimate spaces, the host self was able to imagine how they were seen (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2014). This not only aided in their sense of self but also allowed them a sense of empathy for the volunteer, which inspired the new sense of inclusion and collectivity.

These relationships, that between the host, their identities, and the tourist, are admittedly more dynamic and intricate than this study was able to explore. Our conclusions, however, help us understand that there *is* a relationship and that more questions surrounding host identities in postcolonial environments, particularly those that could emulate colonial patterns, must be asked.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Auxiliary Conditions of this Study

This study was undertaken in such a specific case that certain aspects of the environment have had an impact on the experiences of the host, the interview process, and my interpretation of the interviews. Those most prominent are our use of cameras in the data collection process and the construct of intimacy in the hosts' experience. Both of these were aspects of the study that were crucial in arriving at the conclusions I did but were not at the center of my inquiry. I will try to briefly interpret the importance and impact of these facets, of which I had little control.

6.1.1 The Role of Photography

While my use of photography in the data collection process was well documented in Chapter III, it is important to note its impacts on conclusions to which I have come. My use of cameras in this study was purposive; however, the results of the photo-taking experience were completely in the hands of the respondents.

Using photo elicitation, without a doubt, gave me more robust interview data while also providing for a more casual atmosphere. At times, though, I struggled with balancing my own perceptions of the photographs with what they meant to the host. For this reason, my analysis had to be solely focused on the conversation, not the images taken by the farmers. I allowed the respondents to show the photos at their discretion, occasionally pointing out interesting photo subjects, such as a landscape or their home, to inquire into the meanings behind the photo.

These photos could offer fruitful insights to identity and various meanings in the farmers' lives. Though, a different analysis would be needed for this. Photos of family were common, as were panoramas of the view from the farms. Some photo's subjects were playfully documented by the farmers' kids, others were objects of the farmer's pride. All of the photos, however, were an insight into the life of the host. They each allowed me the chance to learn more about the farmers and use that knowledge to guide my inquiry at their thoughts and feelings. My use of photography was, in part, inspired by the intimacy of the volunteer setting. They made the conversations more intimate, if you will, to replicate the tourists' experiences.

6.1.2 The Role of Intimacy

By acknowledging the intimate environments of the San Miguel Cooperative's volunteer program, I make evident that the findings of these studies are not found in all volunteer tourism settings. While intimacy is not something the main topic of this study, it weighed heavily on the environment about which I was inquiring. As mentioned in previous chapters, intimacy has shown to be a key construct in tourism settings (Trauer & Ryan, 2005; Conran, 2007) and can have an impact on the formation of identities (Giddens, 1999; Urry, 2000; Williams, 2002); therefore, it is imperative that I divulge into the intimate attributes of this study.

In an effort to better depict the intimate setting in which this study took place, I will use two of Piorkowski's and Cardone's (2000) four suggested types of intimacy, verbal and intellectual. *Verbal* intimacy was displayed by the open communication between the host and the volunteer. In each of the hosts' interviews they made mention of the many conversations had with volunteers, which ranged from everyday small talk to deeper, more engaging conversations.

Both types of verbal intimacy helped further connect the lives of the host and volunteer, however the deeper connections, the sharing of thoughts and experiences, were more often cited by the farmers in my interviews.

Intellectual intimacy, which is had by sharing discourse of knowledge, was evident throughout the hosts' experience. The farmers consistently had to engage the volunteer with their knowledge of farming, coffee, and the Guatemalan lifestyle. The tourists reciprocated by offering the host insights in their lives, which was often categorized by farmers as being experiences with different cultures. By sharing this knowledge, the farmers played host to a more rewarding, intimate experience.

6.2 Picturing the Ideal Volunteer Host Experience

While this paper has been focused on, and began as a journey to, understand better the impacts of the volunteer tourism environment, it would be incomplete without an attempt at connecting what we learned to the practicing bodies within the field of volunteer tourism management. Most of the concerns discussed in this paper (Palacios, 2010; Guttentag, 2009) emphasize thoughts of the true impacts of volunteer tourism. As such, it is imperative that researchers disseminate this information to help guide practice. Understanding the impacts is the first step towards positive progression. The rest of this section will offer suggestions of how to move forward, from this paper, to a more mutually beneficial volunteer tourism industry.

My first observation is centered around the intimate setting found in some volunteer tourism environments. In Ciudad Vieja, the setting was such. The farmers met the volunteers in

their town of residence, brought them to their farm, and even welcomed them into their family home. The connections were inevitable but would not have occurred without these intimate experiences. Intimacy can serve as a bridge to a rewarding environment and in tourism, we find no exception (Hayllar & Griffin, 2005). Throughout our interviews with the cooperative members there were descriptions of experiences that left a profound impact on the host. From sharing a freshly roasted cup of coffee (p. 67), to working side-by-side on the coffee fields (p. 62), or simply admiring the landscapes surrounding the farms, each experience led to vivid descriptions of the farmer host spending one-on-one time with individuals whom they would have otherwise not engaged. It is imperative, moving forward, that managers of volunteer tourism experiences consider the value of intimacy in the experience (Conran, 2011). While the positive impacts cannot be guaranteed, it should be the goals of the organization to offer opportunities for these interactions. Though the goal should be a sense of empathy shared between the host and guest, intimacy is one way this goal can be achieved. Those same managers, though, should be cognizant of *how much* they manage.

I would like to suggest that volunteer tourism organizations consider the power structures of the experiences they offer. In this study, it became evident that the farmers felt their role in the volunteer tourism experience was paramount – and it was. From helping a volunteer who struggled on an uphill trek (page 60), to teaching the volunteers about coffee making (page 61), or simply greeting the volunteer upon their arrival, each of these situations allowed the farmer to adopt a new role within the experience. In this, we allow the host to understand that, despite their lack of confidence, they *are* the expert. I, and the volunteers alike, was approaching them to learn from them, to know better what they already know. The adoption of and adaptation to these

roles, particularly those of authority, is what allowed the farmers to surmount their feelings of insignificance. By placing the power of the experience in the hands of the host, we allow them to be better producers of their progress and to reap more of the benefits as discussed in previous chapters. Managers can allow their hosts to have a more powerful opinion in the volunteer experience. This brings into question the role of volunteer organizations, the relationship they have with the host community, and the perceptions that they perpetuate.

With this in mind, I would like to suggest that volunteer tourism organizations consider their presentation of the host community when promoting the experiences to potential volunteers. As mentioned previously in this thesis, the farmers were the focus of the De la Gente website. Images that project tiresome Guatemalans help to form the impressions and expectations of the visitors. It would be helpful that these images represent the reality of not only the experience, but also the livelihood of the host community. In doing so, the volunteer organization is able to build relevant expectations for the volunteer, providing them with an impression void of Western ideals, and allows the focus to again be on the farmer, their life, their product, and, most importantly, their impending success. Tucker and Akama's 2009 (p. 6) example of the marketing of a Kenyan tourism experience shares concern with not adapting our promotions to reality:

[...] the Kenyan tourism image is constructed and reconstructed to revolve around wildlife and the Maasai image and thus the tourist image of the Maasai does not appear to have changed since early European explorers and adventure seekers first encountered the Maasai over 200 years ago.

As the livelihood of the farmers improves, through tourism or not, how will the imagery used be revised? Will it show the new kitchen they built with the help of money from tours? Will

they show the success of the farmer and their new processing equipment? My hope is that it will. If not, we risk confining the hosts to our oppressive preconceptions.

6.2.1 Critical Questions

These recommendations, however, are not to imply that volunteer tourism should be used as a means of self-development or social development within the host communities. These recommendations do not imply that volunteer tourism is *necessary*. Identities are fleeting (Schwalbe, 1988), as are touristic encounters (Singh, 2002). The identities we discussed earlier in this paper, are subject to change, and likely have changed in the time since I left Guatemala. It is imperative, then, that we consider this moving forward. How, since identities are ever-changing, do we ensure that the positive journey seen in this case is sustainable, that the farmers are able to continue their life's journey absent of any of the specific feelings of oppression? Is this even possible?

We should constantly consider, too, whether this journey is *worth* the end result. Do the experiences that the farmer has with volunteers or benefits they receive outweigh any resources lost training or leading these unskilled volunteers? In planning volunteer tourism experiences, it is crucial that we consider not just the potential benefits to the farmer, but also any opportunity costs, real or intangible, associated with implementing the program. In this case, the farmers consistently identified themselves as *farmer* first, *volunteer tourist host* second. As demand for these experiences potentially increases, how will the farmers' identities change? As more time is potentially spent planning for and caring for volunteers, how will the farmers view themselves and their roles? Is there a limit to the amount of time farmers should devote to volunteers? In the

end, we should consider how these experiences will remain sustainable in the form most desired by the farmers.

These critical questions remind us that considerations of the host should remain at the core of planning volunteer tourism experiences. If the farmer is to remain a *farmer* first and a *volunteer host* second, how do we best achieve this sustainability. If not, will the result allow for a more empowered and content host? How?

6.3 Last Words

6.3.1 Limitations and Future Research

It would be naïve to imply that this study is sufficient in answering questions surrounding our concerns about volunteer tourism. This study was undertaken in an environment that was seemingly favorable to the host. The farmers I interviewed were given the opportunity to navigate their selves through potentially negative experiences. The farmers were provided the tools to design their experience as a host in the best way they saw fit. The intimacy we saw in this study was the result of a carefully-designed experience, one with the hosts' best interests in mind. These aspects highlight the specific nature of this study, but also offer clues into what might be the ideal host experience. Even still, we need to know more.

I echo Wearing & McGehee's (2013) plea for more theoretical applications to volunteer tourism. Without such research, we will never be able to adequately and critically progress the phenomenon into its most ideal form. Future scholarship should explore deeper volunteer tourism's impacts on the individual host. Given that we now know the host journey can harbor

feelings of oppression, nervousness, and cultural division, how do the experiences impact the host-self in the long term? In what ways do the experiences seen in this case inform the decision-making of the host, both as a farmer and as a host to volunteer tourist? Research should continue to be critical of these experiences, yet offer insight into how the experiences can be made more positive. In what ways do the structures of power, influenced by postcolonial relationships and otherwise, change the host experience? In what ways do the host identities change as a result of these power relations? Questions like these will allow us to more fully understand the host-tourist relationship within volunteer tourism and will inform best practices within this complicated industry.

6.3.2 Tourism as a Model for Change

Tourism as a human-driven phenomenon is no stranger to the pressures of progress (United Nations, 2017). We must, however, continue to apply this pressure, the pressure for tourism to act as a means to positive change in society. Arguably, it started with paper before this, is aided by this one, and continues with others like it. Researchers must continue to guide this progress towards a just and equitable future.

We have a role, you and I, to serve the host. In tourism development, promotion, and in its practice, we must constantly consider the stewards of our experience. When focusing on the needs and desires of our host community, we avoid the homogenization of a phenomenon that is reliant on differences. We can allow the host cultures and economies to develop as the residents themselves see fit, not by following the pressures of visitors' desires.

Volunteer tourism, in its infancy and today, sought to be a part of that change, of a better world through tourism. We sought, through tourism, to make change on a grand scale. It is imperative that we remember that something like tourism is not equipped to make such a change (Brown & Hall, 2008). However, while the power of tourism is limited on a systemic level, it *is* positioned, as seen in previous chapters, to inspire change on an individual level. In a thoughtfully planned economy of tourism experiences, we can allow for systemic improvements *through* the individual. Tourism does not “reduce development to individual acts of charity” (Brown & Hall, 2008, p. 845), rather, it inspires and guides development through individual acts of connection, of empathy.

It is essential too that we, as researchers, approach our work with criticism. Tucker and Akama, in their discussion of tourism and postcolonialism (2009, p. 9), explain:

Not only has much of tourism promotion and activity been underpinned by the colonial ideological narrative, therefore, but so too has much of the work within tourism studies. The realization of this in itself is a move towards tourism and tourism studies as a form of critical postcolonialism.

Let us be critical then. Borrowing from that statement and what we learned from this thesis, we must constantly consider the labels we give to others, especially the *Other*. This project has helped us realize that despite what we think of someone, it is plausible that our image of them is different than that which they have of themselves. As we progress towards a better understanding of postcolonial identities, we must attempt to be sensitive to the labels we assign and how they might match up, or clash, with others’ identities.

If an optimal understanding of our world, and of tourism, is our goal, to reside on the top of a hill that gathers, understands, and disseminates information from all angles, it is my hope that this paper can serve as a step in the stairway towards the top of that hill.

6.3.3 Theses as a Model for Change

Theses are a model for change. Education, really – but not just any education, a critical one. I suggest that is where we aim, for our children to endure critical educations. All the researchers to which the previous section speaks, their work should be criticized. This thesis itself should be criticized. If there is anything I have learned on this journey, it is that.

Travel, I thought, was something that helped me to develop as a person; to grow up, if you will. I've learned over the last few years that it is actually being placed in the unknown. It just so happens that I most often lived out this feeling through travel experiences. Over the course of this experience, I have visited nine countries, I have written a book's worth of pages, I have done something that defied my own expectations of Chadley, but most importantly, I have learned that I will never be done. I began this journey not expecting much, my work and my experience was not going to be particularly impactful. The previous chapters began on a bus in Ethiopia, heading East to Harar. A note in my smartphone, as I stared at the desertifying landscape, had me perplexed. Why was I being stared at? I was different, I didn't fit in; and that intrigued me. I never really have. Upon interviewing the farmers in Ciudad Vieja, I did not know yet my own answers to those questions would have been just as intriguing. Ironically, then, this project on identity took place at a time when I was trying to find my own. Though I am confident I have found it, through what I have learned, I am aware that it may not be here for long.

What I do know is that this project was some forward step. Some step towards a better place. For me, maybe; but for others too, I hope. I just hope we keep heading that direction. When my committee tells me to read something, I should read it; when I am trying to uncover the truths of a topic, I should explore topics outside the one at hand; when I think a problem is solved, I should flip it upside down and see if it reappears. All these things, lessons which made this experience whole, are the strength to my sail as the winds of societal pressures attempt to force me off the path towards that better place, towards that better world.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Research Question 1:

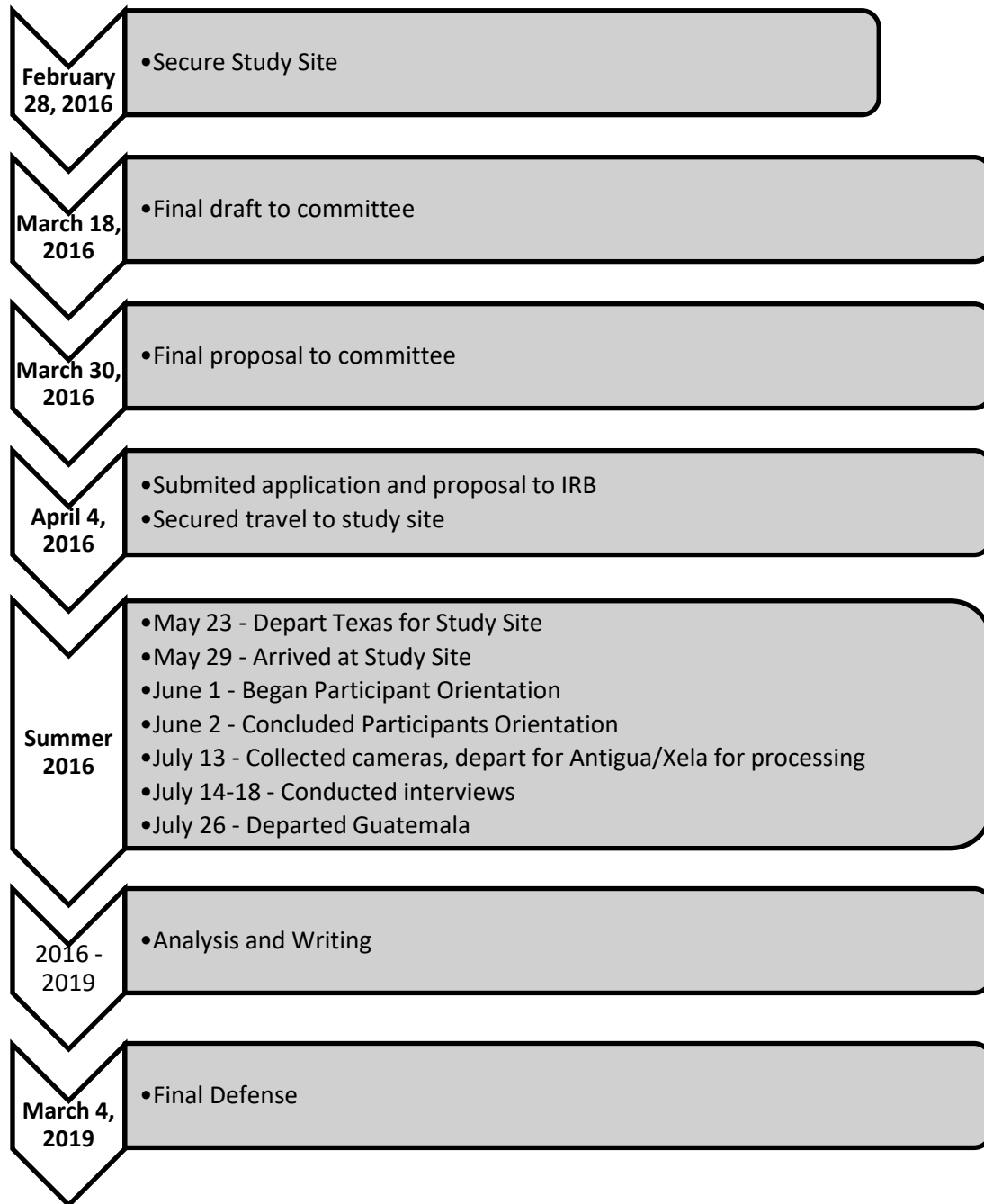
HOW DO THE INTIMATE EXPERIENCES OF VOLUNTEER TOURISM (CONRAN, 2011) HELP TO FORM AND MAINTAIN HOST PERSONAL IDENTITY?		
<i>Does/how does the “looking glass self” transform in the presence of volunteers?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It took more time for you to get ready while the volunteer was here? Why? Did that happen in public? How did it make you feel? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you take that picture? How did it make you feel? Did that change the way you acted around them?
<i>Does/how does the hosts’ role-identity change and adapt in the presence of volunteers?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did you introduce yourself to the volunteer? As a farmer? As a guide? Were you confident in that role? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you feel like you needed to do that for them? Did you ever feel responsible for them?
<i>Are/what other forms of identity (are) at stake in the volunteer tourism experience?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did they respond to that part of your culture? How did that make you feel? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did they do that? Did that make you question your own?

Research Question 2:

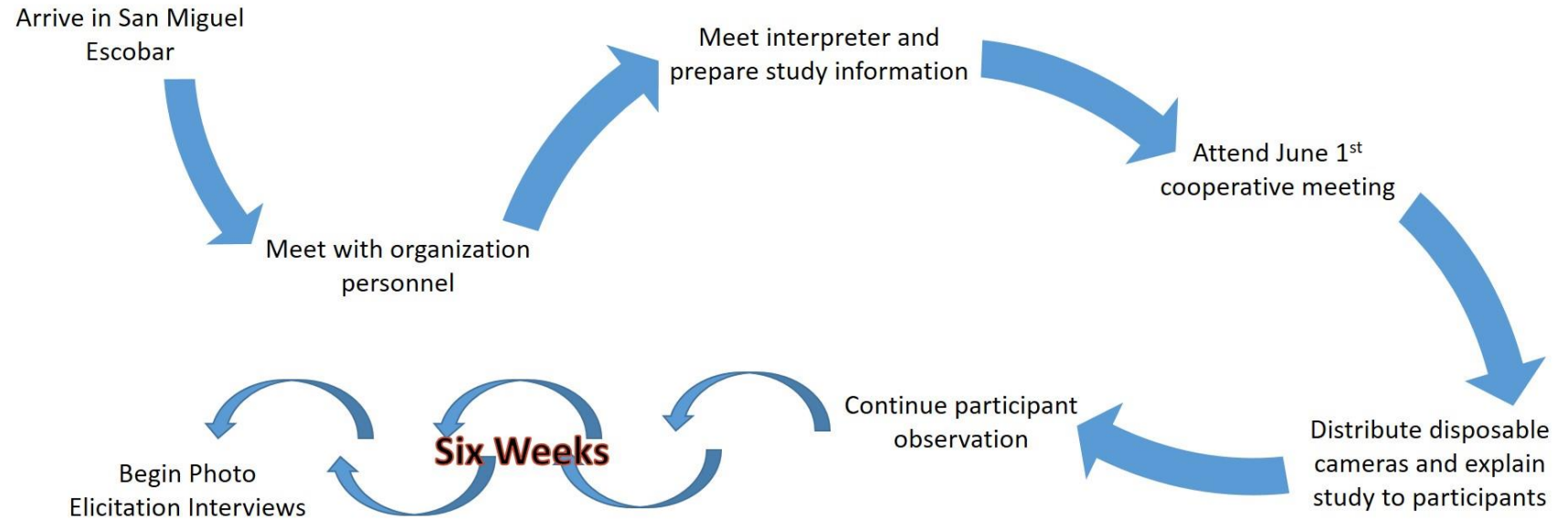
HOW ARE THESE IDENTITIES NEGOTIATED AND MAINTAINED AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF VOLUNTEER TOURISTS?		
<i>Does/how does the renegotiated identity involve self-esteem?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the volunteers left, how did you feel? Now that they’ve left, how do you feel about yourself? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you describe yourself in comparison to the volunteers?
<i>Does/how does the host recognize a difference in their self-concept?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is that different from when before the cooperative brought volunteers in? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because of that, do you feel better about the way you do your job?
<i>Do/how do these identities navigate beyond the self?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has that impacted your friendships? What about your family relationships? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has your role in the cooperative changed since you did that?

Appendix B

Study Timeline



On-Site Timeline



Appendix C

Q1: How do VT experiences form and maintain host identity?	
Looking glass self	
Role identity	
Other identities?	

Q2: How are identities maintained/affected after the VTs leave?	
How does it impact self-esteem	
Differences in self-concept	
How the identities navigate beyond the self	

Appendix D

